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# Humorous Masterpieces

from

# American Literature

*Volume Three*

Howells, Burdette, Cable
Harris, Harte

G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York and London
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# WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS.[1]

(BORN, 1837.)

## MRS. JOHNSON.

IT was on a morning of the lovely New England May that we left the horse-car, and, spreading our umbrellas, walked down the street to our new home in Charlesbridge, through a storm of snow and rain so finely blent by the influences of this fortunate climate, that no flake knew itself from its sister drop, or could be better identified by the people against whom they beat in unison. A vernal gale from the east fanned our cheeks and pierced our marrow and chilled our blood, while the raw, cold green of the adventurous grass on the borders of the sopping side-walks gave, as it peered through its veil of melting snow and freezing rain, a peculiar cheerfulness to the landscape. Here and there in the vacant lots abandoned hoop-skirts defied decay; and near the half-finished wooden houses, empty mortar-

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xxvii.

beds, and bits of lath and slate strewn over the scarred and mutilated ground, added their interest to the scene. . . .

This heavenly weather, which the Pilgrim Fathers, with the idea of turning their thoughts effectually from earthly pleasures, came so far to discover, continued with slight amelioration throughout the month of May and far into June; and it was a matter of constant amazement with one who had known less austere climates, to behold how vegetable life struggled with the hostile skies, and, in an atmosphere as chill and damp as that of a cellar, shot forth the buds and blossoms upon the pear-trees, called out the sour Puritan courage of the currant-bushes, taught a reckless native grape-vine to wander and wanton over the southern side of the fence, and decked the banks with violets as fearless and as fragile as New England girls; so that about the end of June, when the heavens relented and the sun blazed out at last, there was little for him to do but to redden and darken the daring fruits that had attained almost their full growth without his countenance.

Then, indeed, Charlesbridge appeared to us a kind of Paradise. The wind blew all day from the southwest, and all day in the grove across the

way the orioles sang to their nestlings. . . . The house was almost new and in perfect repair; and, better than all, the kitchen had as yet given no signs of unrest in those volcanic agencies which are constantly at work there, and which, with sudden explosions, make Herculaneums and Pompeiis of so many smiling households. Breakfast, dinner, and tea came up with illusive regularity, and were all the most perfect of their kind; and we laughed and feasted in our vain security. We had out from the city to banquet with us the friends we loved, and we were inexpressibly proud before them of the Help, who first wrought miracles of cookery in our honor, and then appeared in a clean white apron, and the glossiest black hair, to wait upon the table. She was young, and certainly very pretty; she was as gay as a lark, and was courted by a young man whose clothes would have been a credit, if they had not been a reproach, to our lowly basement. She joyfully assented to the idea of staying with us till she married.

In fact, there was much that was extremely pleasant about the little place when the warm weather came, and it was not wonderful to us that Jenny was willing to remain. It was very

quiet; we called one another to the window if a large dog went by our door; and whole days passed without the movement of any wheels but the butcher's upon our street, which flourished in ragweed and buttercups and daisies, and in the autumn burned, like the borders of nearly all the streets in Charlesbridge, with the pallid azure flame of the succory. The neighborhood was in all things a frontier between city and country. The horse-cars, the type of such civilization—full of imposture, discomfort, and sublime possibility—as we yet possess, went by the head of our street, and might, perhaps, be available to one skilled in calculating the movements of comets; while two minutes' walk would take us into a wood so wild and thick that no roof was visible through the trees. We learned, like innocent pastoral people of the golden age, to know the several voices of the cows pastured in the vacant lots, and, like engine-drivers of the iron age, to distinguish the different whistles of the locomotives passing on the neighboring railroad. . . .

We played a little at gardening, of course, and planted tomatoes, which the chickens seemed to like, for they ate them up as fast as they ripened; and we watched with pride the

growth of our Lawton blackberries, which, after attaining the most stalwart proportions, were still as bitter as the scrubbiest of their savage brethren, and which, when by advice left on the vines for a week after they turned black, were silently gorged by secret and gluttonous flocks of robins and orioles. As for our grapes, the frost cut them off in the hour of their triumph.

So, as I have hinted, we were not surprised that Jenny should be willing to remain with us, and were as little prepared for her desertion as for any other change of our mortal state. But one day in September she came to her nominal mistress with tears in her beautiful eyes and protestations of unexampled devotion upon her tongue, and said that she was afraid she must leave us. She liked the place, and she never had worked for any one that was more of a lady, but she had made up her mind to go into the city. All this, so far, was quite in the manner of domestics who, in ghost stories, give warning to the occupants of haunted houses; and Jenny's mistress listened in suspense for the motive of her desertion, expecting to hear no less than that it was something which walked up and down the stairs and dragged iron links after it, or something that came and

groaned at the front door, like populace dissatisfied with a political candidate. But it was in fact nothing of this kind; simply, there were no lamps upon our street, and Jenny, after spending Sunday evening with friends in East Charlesbridge, was always alarmed, on her return, in walking from the horse-car to our door. The case was hopeless, and Jenny and our household parted with respect and regret.

We had not before this thought it a grave disadvantage that our street was unlighted. Our street was not drained nor graded; no municipal cart ever came to carry away our ashes; there was not a water-butt within a half a mile to save us from fire, nor more than the one-thousandth part of a policeman to protect us from theft. Yet, as I paid a heavy tax, I somehow felt that we enjoyed the benefits of city government, and never looked upon Charlesbridge as in any way undesirable for residence. But when it became necessary to find help in Jenny's place, the frosty welcome given to application at the intelligence offices renewed a painful doubt awakened by her departure. To be sure, the heads of the offices were polite enough; but when the young housekeeper had stated her case at the first to

which she applied, and the Intelligencer had called out to the invisible expectants in the adjoining room, "Anny wan wants to do giner'l housewark in Charlsbrudge?" there came from the maids invoked so loud, so fierce, so full a "No!" as shook the lady's heart with an indescribable shame and dread. The name that, with an innocent pride in its literary and historical associations, she had written at the heads of her letters, was suddenly become a matter of reproach to her; and she was almost tempted to conceal thereafter that she lived in Charlesbridge, and to pretend that she dwelt upon some wretched little street in Boston. "You see," said the head of the office, "the gairls does n't like to live so far away from the city. Now, if it was on'y in the Port." . . .

This pen is not graphic enough to give the remote reader an idea of the affront offered to an inhabitant of Old Charlesbridge in these closing words. Neither am I of sufficiently tragic mood to report here all the sufferings undergone by an unhappy family in finding servants, or to tell how the winter was passed with miserable makeshifts. Alas! is it not the history of a thousand experiences? Any one who looks upon this page could match it with

a tale as full of heartbreak and disaster, while I conceive that, in hastening to speak of Mrs. Johnson, I approach a subject of unique interest. . . .

I say, our last Irish girl went with the last snow, and on one of those midsummer-like days that sometimes fall in early April to our yet bleak and desolate zone, our hearts sang of Africa and golden joys. A Libyan longing took us, and we would have chosen, if we could, to bear a strand of grotesque beads, or a handful of brazen gauds, and traffic them for some sable maid with crisp locks, whom, uncoffling from the captive train beside the desert, we should make to do our general housework forever, through the right of lawful purchase. But we knew that this was impossible, and that, if we desired colored help, we must seek it at the intelligence office, which is in one of those streets chiefly inhabited by the orphaned children and grandchildren of slavery. To tell the truth these orphans do not seem to grieve much for their bereavement, but lead a life of joyous, and rather indolent oblivion in their quarter of the city. They are often to be seen sauntering up and down the street by which the Charlesbridge cars arrive,—the young

with a harmless swagger, and the old with the generic limp which our Autocrat has already noted as attending advanced years in their race. . . . How gayly are the young ladies of this race attired, as they trip up and down the sidewalks, and in and out through the pendent garments at the shop-doors! They are the black pansies and marigolds and dark-blooded dahlias among womankind. They try to assume some thing of our colder race's demeanor, but even the passer on the horse-car can see that it is not native with them, and is better pleased when they forget us, and ungenteelly laugh in encountering friends, letting their white teeth glitter through the generous lips that open to their ears. In the streets branching upward from this avenue, very little colored men and maids play with broken or enfeebled toys, or sport on the wooden pavements of the entrances to the inner courts. Now and then a colored soldier or sailor—looking strange in his uniform, even after the custom of several years—emerges from those passages; or, more rarely, a black gentleman, stricken in years, and cased in shining broadcloth, walks solidly down the brick sidewalk, cane in hand,—a vision of serene self-complacency, and so plainly the expression of

virtuous public sentiment that the great colored louts, innocent enough till then in their idleness, are taken with a sudden sense of depravity, and loaf guiltily up against the house-walls. At the same moment, perhaps, a young damsel, amorously scuffling with an admirer through one of the low open windows, suspends the strife, and bids him,—"Go along now, do!" More rarely yet than the gentleman described, one may see a white girl among the dark neighbors, whose frowsy head is uncovered, and whose sleeves are rolled up to her elbows, and who, though no doubt quite at home, looks as strange there as that pale anomaly which may sometime be seen among a crew of blackbirds.

An air not so much of decay as of unthrift, and yet hardly of unthrift, seems to prevail in the neighborhood, which has none of the aggressive and impudent squalor of an Irish quarter, and none of the surly wickedness of a low American street. A gayety not born of the things that bring its serious joy to the true New England heart—a ragged gayety, which comes of summer in the blood, and not in the pocket or the conscience, and which effects the countenance and the whole demeanor, setting the feet to some inward music, and at times

bursting into a line of song or a child-like and irresponsible laugh—gives tone to the visible life, and wakens a very friendly spirit in the passer, who somehow thinks there of a milder climate, and is half persuaded that the orange-peel on the sidewalks came from fruit grown in the soft atmosphere of those back courts.

It was in this quarter, then, that we heard of Mrs. Johnson; and it was from a colored boarding-house there that she came out to Charlesbridge to look at us, bringing her daughter of twelve years with her. She was a matron of mature age and portly figure, with a complexion like coffee soothed with the richest cream; and her manners were so full of a certain tranquillity and grace, that she charmed away all our will to ask for references. It was only her barbaric laughter and lawless eye that betrayed how slightly her New England birth and breeding covered her ancestral traits, and bridged the gulf of a thousand years of civilization that lay between her race and ours. But in fact, she was doubly estranged by descent; for, as we learned later, a sylvan wildness mixed with that of the desert in her veins: her grandfather was an Indian, and her ancestors on this side had probably sold their lands for the same value in

trinkets that bought the original African p
on the other side.

The first day that Mrs. Johnson descen
into our kitchen, she conjured from the m
cious disorder in which it had been left by
flitting Irish kobold a dinner that revealed
inspirations of genius, and was quite differ
from a dinner of mere routine and laborio
talent. Something original and auther
mingled with the accustomed flavors; a
though vague reminiscences of canal-boat tra
and woodland camps arose from the relish
certain of the dishes, there was yet the ass
ance of such power in the preparation of
whole, that we knew her to be merely runn
over the chords of our appetite with prelimin
savors, as a musician acquaints his touch w
the keys of an unfamiliar piano before break
into brilliant and triumphant execution. Wi
in a week she had mastered her instrume
and thereafter there was no faltering in
performances, which she varied constant
through inspiration or from suggestion. .
But, after all, it was in puddings that M
Johnson chiefly excelled. She was one of th
cooks—rare as men of genius in literature
who love their own dishes; and she had, in

personally child-like simplicity of taste, and the inherited appetites of her savage forefathers, a dominant passion for sweets. So far as we could learn, she subsisted principally upon puddings and tea. Through the same primitive instincts, no doubt, she loved praise. She openly exulted in our artless flatteries of her skill; she waited jealously at the head of the kitchen stairs to hear what was said of her work, especially if there were guests; and she was never too weary to attempt emprises of cookery.

While engaged in these, she wore a species of sightly handkerchief like a turban upon her head, and about her person those mystical swathings in which old ladies of the African race delight. But she most pleasured our sense of beauty and moral fitness when, after the last pan was washed and the last pot was scraped, she lighted a potent pipe, and, taking her stand at the kitchen door, laded the soft evening air with its pungent odors. If we surprised her at these supreme moments, she took the pipe from her lips, and put it behind her, with a low, mellow chuckle, and a look of half-defiant consciousness; never guessing that none of her merits took us half so much as the cheerful vice which she only feigned to conceal.

Some things she could not do so perfectly a
cooking because of her failing eyesight, and w
persuaded her that spectacles would both be
come and befriend a lady of her years, and
so bought her a pair of steel-bowed glasses
She wore them in some great emergencies a
first, but had clearly no pride in them. Befor
long she laid them aside altogether, and they
had passed from our thoughts, when one da
we heard her mellow note of laughter and he
daughter's harsher cackle outside our door, and
opening it, beheld Mrs. Johnson in gold-bowe
spectacles of massive frame. We then learne
that their purchase was in fulfilment of a vo
made long ago, in the life-time of Mr. Johnson
that, if ever she wore glasses, they should b
gold-bowed; and I hope the manes of the dea
were half as happy in these votive spectacles a
the simple soul that offered them.

She and her late partner were the parents o
eleven children, some of whom were dead, and
some of whom were wanderers in unknow
parts. During his life-time she had kept
little shop in her native town; and it wa
only within a few years that she had gon
into service. She cherished a natura
haughtiness of spirit, and resented contro

lthough disposed to do all she could of her wn notion. Being told to say when she vanted an afternoon, she explained that vhen she wanted an afternoon she always ook it without asking, but always planned o as not to discommode the ladies with vhom she lived. These, she said, had num- bered twenty-seven within three years, which made us doubt the success of her system in ll cases, though she merely held out the fact as an assurance of her faith in the future, and a proof of the ease with which places are to be found. She contended, moreover, that a lady who had for thirty years had a house of her own, was in nowise bound to ask permission to receive visits from friends where she might be living, but that they ought freely to come and go like other guests. In this spirit she once invited her son-in-law, Professor Jones of Providence, to dine with her; and her defied mistress, on entering the dining-room, found the Professor at pudding and tea there,—an impressively respectable figure in black clothes, with a black face rendered yet more effective by a pair of green goggles. It appeared that this dark professor was a light of phrenology in Rhode Island, and that he was

believed to have uncommon virtue in his science by reason of being blind as well as black.

I am loath to confess that Mrs. Johnson had not a flattering opinion of the Caucasian race in all respects. In fact, she had very good philosophical and Scriptural reasons for looking upon us as an upstart people of new blood, who had come into their whiteness by no creditable or pleasant process. The late Mr. Johnson, who had died in the West Indies, whither he voyaged for his health in quality of cook upon a Down-East schooner, was a man of letters, and had written a book to show the superiority of the black over the white branches of the human family. In this he held that, as all islands have been at their discovery found peopled by blacks, we must needs believe that humanity was first created of that color. Mrs. Johnson could not show us her husband's work (a sole copy in the library of an English gentleman at Port au Prince is not to be bought for money), but she often developed its arguments to the lady of the house; and one day, with a great show of reluctance, and many protests that no personal slight was meant, let fall the fact that Mr. Johnson believed the white race descended from Gehaz[1]

the leper, upon whom the leprosy of Naaman fell when the latter returned by Divine favor to his original blackness. "And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow," said Mrs. Johnson, quoting irrefutable Scripture. "Leprosy, leprosy," she added thoughtfully,—nothing but leprosy bleached you out."

It seems to me much in her praise that she did not exult in our taint and degradation, as some white philosophers used to do in the opposite idea that a part of the human family were cursed to lasting blackness and slavery in Ham and his children, but even told us of a remarkable approach to whiteness in many of her own offspring. In a kindred spirit of charity, no doubt, she refused ever to attend church with people of her elder and wholesomer blood. When she went to church, she said, she always went to a white church, though while with us I am bound to say she never went to any. She professed to read her Bible in her bedroom on Sundays; but we suspected, from certain sounds and odors which used to steal out of this sanctuary, that her piety more commonly found expression in dozing and smoking.

I would not make a wanton jest here of Mrs·

Johnson's anxiety to claim honor for the African color, while denying this color in many of her own family. It afforded a glimpse of the pain which all her people must endure, however proudly they hide it or light-heartedly forget it, from the despite and contumely to which they are guiltlessly born; and when I thought how irreparable was this disgrace and calamity of a black skin, and how irreparable it must be for ages yet, in this world where every other shame and all manner of wilful guilt and wickedness may hope for covert and pardon, I had little heart to laugh. Indeed, it was so pathetic to hear this poor old soul talk of her dead and lost ones, and try, in spite of all Mr. Johnson's theories and her own arrogant generalizations, to establish their whiteness, that we must have been very cruel and silly people to turn her sacred fables even into matter of question. I have no doubt that her Antoinette Anastasia and her Thomas Jefferson Wilberforce—it is impossible to give a full idea of the splendor and scope of the baptismal names in Mrs. Johnson's family—have as light skins and as golden hair in heaven as her reverend maternal fancy painted for them in our world. There, certainly, they would not be subject to

tanning, which had ruined the delicate complexion, and had knotted into black wholly tangles the once wavy blonde locks of our little maid-servant Naomi; and I would fain believe that Toussaint Washington Johnson, who ran away to sea so many years ago, has found some fortunate zone where his hair and skin keep the same sunny and rosy tints they wore to his mother's eyes in infancy. But I have no means of knowing this, or of telling whether he was the prodigy of intellect that he was declared to be. Naomi could no more be taken in proof of the one assertion than of the other. When she came to us, it was agreed that she should go to school; but she overruled her mother in this as in every thing else, and never went. Except Sunday-school lessons, she had no other instruction than that her mistress gave her in the evenings, when a heavy day's play and the natural influences of the hour conspired with original causes to render her powerless before words of one syllable.

The first week of her services she was obedient and faithful to her duties; but, relaxing in the atmosphere of a house which seems to demoralize all menials, she shortly fell into disorderly ways of lying in wait for callers out of

doors, and, when people rang, of running up the front steps, and letting them in from the outside. As the season expanded, and the fine weather became confirmed, she modified even this form of service, and spent her time in the fields, appearing at the house only when nature importunately craved molasses. . . .

In her untamable disobedience, Naomi alone betrayed her sylvan blood, for she was in all other respects negro and not Indian. But it was of her aboriginal ancestry that Mrs. Johnson chiefly boasted,—when not engaged in argument to maintain the superiority of the African race. She loved to descant upon it as the cause and explanation of her own arrogant habit of feeling; and she seemed indeed to have inherited something of the Indian's hauteur along with the Ethiop's supple cunning and abundant amiability. She gave many instances in which her pride had met and overcome the insolence of employers, and the kindly old creature was by no means singular in her pride of being reputed proud.

She could never have been a woman of strong logical faculties, but she had in some things a very surprising and awful astuteness. She seldom introduced any purpose directly, but

bore all about it, and then suddenly sprung it upon her unprepared antagonist. At other times she obscurely hinted a reason, and left a conclusion to be inferred; as when she warded off reproach for some delinquency by saying in a general way that she had lived with ladies who used to come scolding into the kitchen after they had taken their bitters. "Quality ladies took their bitters regular," she added, to remove any sting of personality from her remark; for, from many things she had let fall, we knew that she did not regard us as quality. On the contrary, she often tried to overbear us with the gentility of her former places; and would tell the lady over whom she reigned, that she had lived with folks worth their three and four hundred thousand dollars, who never complained as she did of the ironing. Yet she had a sufficient regard for the literary occupations of the family, Mr. Johnson having been an author. She even professed to have herself written a book, which was still in manuscript, and preserved somewhere among her best clothes.

It was well, on many accounts, to be in contact with a mind so original and suggestive as Mrs. Johnson's. We loved to trace its intricate

yet often transparent operations, and were per haps too fond of explaining its peculiarities by facts of ancestry,—of finding hints of the Pow wow or the Grand Custom in each grotesque development. We were conscious of some thing warmer in this old soul than in ourselves and something wilder, and we chose to think it the tropic and the untracked forest. She had scarcely any being apart from her affection she had no morality, but was good because she neither hated nor envied; and she might have been a saint far more easily than far more civilized people.

There was that also in her sinuous yet malleable nature, so full of guile and so full of goodness, that reminded us pleasantly of lowly folks in elder lands, where relaxing oppressions have lifted the restraints of fear between master and servant, without disturbing the familiarity of their relation. She advised freely with us upon all household matters, and took motherly interest in whatever concerned us She could be flattered or caressed into almost any service, but no threat or command could move her. When she erred, she never acknowledged her wrong in words, but handsomely expressed her regrets in a pudding, o

ent up her apologies in a favorite dish secretly repared. We grew so well used to this form f exculpation, that, whenever Mrs. Johnson ook an afternoon at an inconvenient season, e knew that for a week afterwards we should e feasted like princes. She owned frankly hat she loved us, that she never had done half o much for people before, and that she never ad been nearly so well suited in any other lace; and for a brief and happy time we hought that we never should part.

One day, however, our dividing destiny appeared in the basement, and was presented to s as Hippolyto Thucydides, the son of Mrs. ohnson, who had just arrived on a visit to his nother from the State of New Hampshire. He vas a heavy and loutish youth, standing upon he borders of boyhood, and looking forward to he future with a vacant and listless eye. I nean this was his figurative attitude; his actual nanner, as he lolled upon a chair beside the itchen window, was so eccentric, that we felt a ttle uncertain how to regard him, and Mrs. ohnson openly described him as peculiar. He vas so deeply tanned by the fervid suns of the New Hampshire winter, and his hair had so far uffered from the example of the sheep lately

under his charge, that he could not be classe by any stretch of compassion with the blond and straight-haired members of Mrs. Johnson' family.

He remained with us all the first day unt late in the afternoon, when his mother too him out to get him a boarding-house. The he departed in the van of her and Naom pausing at the gate to collect his spirits, an after he had sufficiently animated himself b clapping his palms together, starting off dow the street at a hand-gallop, to the manife terror of the cows in the pasture, and the co fusion of the less demonstrative people of ou household. Other characteristic traits appeare in Hippolyto Thucydides within no very lon period of time, and he ran away from his lod ings so often during the summer that he migh be said to board round among the outlyin corn-fields and turnip-patches of Charlesbridg As a check upon this habit, Mrs. Johnso seemed to have invited him to spend his whol time in our basement; for whenever we wer below we found him there, balanced—perha in homage to us, and perhaps as a token of e treme sensibility in himself—upon the lo window-sill, the bottoms of his boots touchin

the floor inside, and his face buried in the grass without.

We could formulate no very tenable objection to all this, and yet the presence of Thucydides in our kitchen unaccountably oppressed our imaginations. We beheld him all over the house, a monstrous eidolon, balanced upon every window-sill; and he certainly attracted unpleasant notice to our place, no less by his furtive and hang-dog manner of arrival than by the bold displays with which he celebrated his departures. We hinted this to Mrs. Johnson, but she could not enter into our feeling. Indeed, all the wild poetry of her maternal and primitive nature seemed to cast itself about this hapless boy; and if we had listened to her we should have believed there was no one so agreeable in society, or so quick-witted in affairs, as Hippolyto, when he chose. . . .

At last, when we said positively that Thucydides should come to us no more, and then qualified the prohibition by allowing him to come every Sunday, she answered that she never would hurt the child's feelings by telling him not to come where his mother was; that people who did not love her children did not love her; and that, if Hippy went, she

went. We thought it a masterstroke of firmness to rejoin that Hippolyto must go in any event; but I am bound to own that he did not go, and that his mother stayed, and so fed us with every cunning propitiatory dainty, that we must have been Pagans to renew our threat. In fact, we begged Mrs. Johnson to go into the country with us, and she, after long reluctation on Hippy's account, consented, agreeing to send him away to friends during her absence.

We made every preparation, and on the eve of our departure, Mrs. Johnson went into the city to engage her son's passage to Bangor, while we awaited her return in untroubled security.

But she did not appear till midnight, and then responded with but a sad "Well, sah!" to the cheerful "Well, Mrs. Johnson!" that greeted her.

"All right, Mrs. Johnson?"

Mrs. Johnson made a strange noise, half chuckle and half death-rattle, in her throat. "All wrong, sah. Hippy 's off again; and I 've been all over the city after him."

"Then you can't go with us in the morning?"

"How *can* I, sah?"

Mrs. Johnson went sadly out of the room.

Then she came back to the door again, and opening it, uttered, for the first time in our service, words of apology and regret: "I hope I ha'n't put you out any. I *wanted* to go with you, but I ought to *knowed* I could n't. All is, I loved you too much."—*Suburban Sketches.*

## THE VETERAN.

We have been a good deal visited by one disbanded volunteer, not to the naked eye maimed, nor apparently suffering from any lingering illness, yet who bears, as he tells me, a secret disabling wound in his side, from a spent shell, and who is certainly a prey to the most acute form of shiftlessness. I do not recall with exactness the date of our acquaintance, but it was one of those pleasant August afternoons when a dinner eaten in peace fills the digester with a millennial tenderness for the race, too rarely felt in the nineteenth century. At such a moment it is a more natural action to loosen than to tighten the purse-strings, and when a very neatly dressed young man presented himself at the gate, and, in a note of indescribable plaintiveness, asked if I had any little job for him to do that he might pay for a night's lodging, I looked about the small do-

main with a vague longing to find some part
it in disrepair, and experienced a moment's
surd relief when he hinted that he would
willing to accept fifty cents in pledge of futu
service. Yet this was not the right princip
some work, real or apparent, must be done
the money, and the veteran was told that
might weed the strawberry-bed, though,
matters then stood, it was clean enough
a strawberry-bed that never bore any thi
The veteran was neatly dressed, as I have sa
his coat which was good, was buttoned to t
throat for reasons that shall be sacred agai
curiosity, and he had on a perfectly clean pa
collar; he was a handsome young fellow, w
regular features, and a solicitously kept imper
and mustache; his hair, when he lifted his h
appeared elegantly oiled and brushed. I
not hope from this figure that the work dc
would be worth the money paid, and, as nea
as I can compute, the weeds he took from th
bed cost me a cent apiece, to say nothing o
cup of tea given him in grace at the end of
labors.

My acquaintanae was, as the reader will
glad to learn, a native American, though it
to be regretted, for the sake of facts which

case went far to establish, that he was not a New-Englander by birth. The most that could be claimed was, that he came to Boston from Delaware when very young, and that there, on that brine-washed granite, he had grown as perfect a flower of helplessness and indolence, as fine a fruit of maturing civilization, as ever expanded or ripened in Latin lands. He lived, not only a protest in flesh and blood against the tendency of democracy to exclude mere beauty from our system, but a refutation of those Old-World observers, who deny to our vulgar and bustling communities the refining and elevating grace of Repose. There was something very curious and original in his character, from which the sentiment of shame was absent, but which was not lacking in the fine instincts of personal cleanliness, of dress, of style. There was nothing of the rowdy in him; he was gentle as an Italian noble in his manners; what other traits they may have had in common, I do not know; perhaps an amiable habit of illusion. He was always going to bring me his discharge papers, but he never did, though he came often and had many a pleasant night's sleep at my cost. If sometimes he did a little work, he spent a great part of

the time contracted to me in the kitchen, where it was understood, quite upon his own agency, that his wages included board. At other times he called for money too late in the evening to work it out that day, and it has happened that a new second girl, deceived by his genteel appearance in the uncertain light, has shown him into the parlor, where I have found him, to his and my own great amusement, as the gentleman who wanted to see me. Nothing else seemed to raise his ordinarily dejected spirits so much. We all know how pleasant it is to laugh at people behind their backs; but this veteran afforded me at a very low rate the luxury of a fellow-being whom one might laugh at to his face as much as one liked.

Yet with all his shamelessness, his pensiveness, his elegance, I felt that somehow our national triumph was not complete in him,—that there were yet more finished forms of self-abasement in the Old World, till one day I looked out of the window and saw at a little distance my veteran digging a cellar for an Irishman. I own that the spectacle gave me a shock of pleasure, and that I ran down to have a nearer view of what human eyes have seldom, if ever, beheld,—an American, pure blood,

handling the pick, the shovel, and the wheelbarrow, while an Irishman directed his labors. Upon inspection, it appeared that none of the trees grew with their roots in the air, in recognition of this great reversal of the natural law; all the French-roof houses stood right-side up. The phenomenon may become more common in future, unless the American race accomplishes the destiny of dying out before the more populatory foreigner, but as yet it graced the veteran with an exquisite and signal distinction. He, however, seemed to feel unpleasantly the anomaly of his case, and opened the conversation by saying that he should not work at that job to-morrow, it hurt his side; and went on to complain of the inhumanity of Americans to Americans. "Why," said he, "they 'd rather give out their jobs to a nigger than to one of their own kind. I was beatin' carpets for a gentleman on the Avenue, and the first thing I know he give most of 'em to a nigger. I beat seven of 'em in one day, and got two dollars; and the nigger beat 'em by the piece, and he got a dollar and a half apiece. My luck!"

Here the Irishman glanced at his hireling, and the rueful veteran hastened to pile up another wheelbarrow with earth. If we ever come to re-

verse positions generally with our Irish brethren, there is no doubt but they will get more work out of us than we do from them at present.

It was shortly after this that the veteran offered to do second girl's work in my house if I would take him. The place was not vacant; and as the summer was now drawing to a close, and I feared to be left with him on my hands for the winter, it seemed well to speak with him upon the subject of economy. The next time he called, I had not about me the exact sum for a night's lodging,—fifty cents, namely,—and asked him if he thought a dollar would do. He smiled sadly, as if he did not like jesting upon such a very serious subject, but said he allowed to work it out, and took it.

"Now, I hope you won't think I am interfering with your affairs," said his benefactor, "but I really think you are a very poor financier. According to your own account, you have been going on from year to year for a long time, trusting to luck for a night's lodging. Sometimes I suppose you have to sleep out-of-doors."

"No, never!" answered the veteran, with some thing like scorn. "I *never* sleep out-doors. I would n't do it."

"Well, at any rate, some one has to pay for your lodging. Don't you think you 'd come cheaper to your friends, if, instead of going to a hotel every night, you 'd take a room somewhere, and pay for it by the month?"

"I 've thought of that. If I could get a good bed, I 'd try it awhile anyhow. You see the hotels have raised. I used to get a lodgin' and a nice breakfast for a half dollar, but now it is as much as you can do to get a lodgin' for the money, and it 's just as dear in the Port as it is in the city. I 've tried hotels pretty much everywhere, and one 's about as bad as another."

If he had been a travelled Englishman writing a book, he could not have spoken of hotels with greater disdain.

"You see, the trouble with me is, I ain't got any relations around here. Now," he added with the life and eagerness of an inspiration, "if I had a mother and sister livin' down at the Port, say, I would n't go hunting about for these mean little jobs everywheres. I 'd just lay around home, and wait till something come up big. What I want is a home."

At the instigation of a malignant spirit I asked the homeless orphan, "Why don't you get married, then?"

He gave me another smile, sadder, fainter, sweeter than before, and said: "When would you like to see me again, so I could work out this dollar?"

A sudden and unreasonable disgust for the character which had given me so much entertainment succeeded to my past delight. I felt, moreover, that I had bought the right to use some frankness with the veteran, and I said to him: "Do you know now, I should n't care if I *never* saw you again?"

I can only conjecture that he took the confidence in good part, for he did not appear again after that.—*Suburban Sketches* (*Doorstep Acquaintance*).

## MARY ABIGAIL DODGE.[1]

("GAIL HAMILTON.")

(BORN, 1838.)

### MY GARDEN.

I CAN speak of it calmly now; but there have been moments when the lightest mention of those words would sway my soul to its profoundest depths. I am a woman. You may have inferred this before; but I now desire to state it distinctly, because I like to do as I would be done by, when I can just as well as not. It rasps a person of my temperament exceedingly to be deceived. When any one tells a story, we wish to know at the outset whether the story-teller is a man or a woman. The two sexes awaken two entirely distinct sets of feelings, and you would no more use the one for the other than you would put on your tiny tea-cups at breakfast, or lay the carving-knife by the butter-plate. Consequent-

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xxiii.

ly, it is very exasperating to sit, open-eyed and expectant, watching the removal of the successive swathings which hide from you the dusky glories of an old-time princess, and, when the unrolling is over, to find it nothing, after all, but a great lubberly boy. Equally trying is it to feel your interest clustering round a narrator's manhood, all your individuality merging in his, till, of a sudden, by the merest chance, you catch the swell of crinoline, and there you are. Away with such clumsiness! Let us have everybody christened before we begin. . . .

May I ask you now, O friend, who, I would fain believe, have followed me thus far with no hostile eyes, to glide in tranced forgetfulness through the white blossoms of May and the roses of June, into the warm breath of July afternoons and the languid pulse of August, perhaps even into the mild haze of September and the "flying gold" of brown October? In narrating to you the fruition of my hopes, I shall endeavor to preserve that calm equanimity which is the birthright of royal minds. I shall endeavor not to be unduly elated by success nor unduly depressed by failure, but to state in simple language the result of my ex-

periments, both for an encouragement and a warning. I shall give the history of the several ventures separately, as nearly as I can recollect in the order in which they grew, beginning with the humbler ministers to our appetites, and soaring gradually into the region of the poetical and the beautiful.

BEETS.—The beets came up, little red-veined leaves, struggling for breath among a tangle of Roman wormwood and garlic; and though they exhibited great tenacity of life, they also exhibited great irregularity of purpose. In one spot there would be nothing, in an adjacent spot a whorl of beets, big and little, crowding and jostling and elbowing each other, like school-boys around the red-hot stove on a winter's morning. I knew they had been planted in a right line, and I don't even now comprehend why they did not come up in a right line. I weeded them, and though freedom from foreign growth discovered an intention of straightness, the most casual observer could not but see that skewiness had usurped its place. I repaired to my friend the gardener. He said they must be thinned out and transplanted. It went to my heart to pull up the dear things, but I did it, and set them down again tenderly

in the vacant spots. It was evening. Th
next morning I went to them. Flatness has
new meaning to me since that morning. Yo
can hardly conceive that any thing could look s
utterly forlorn, disconsolate, disheartened an
collapsed. In fact, they exhibited a degree o
depression so entirely beyond what the circum
stances demanded, that I was enraged. I
they had shown any symptoms of trying t
live, I could have sighed and forgiven them
but, on the contrary, they had flopped and die
without a struggle, and I pulled them u
without a pang, comforting myself with the re
maining ones, which throve on their com
panions' graves, and waxed fat and full an
crimson-hearted, in their soft, brown beds. S
delighted was I with their luxuriant rotundity
that I made an internal resolve that hencefort
I would always plant beets. True, I canno
abide beets. Their fragrance and their flavo
are alike nauseating; but they come up, and
beet that will come up is better than a cedar o
Lebanon that won't. In all the vegetabl
kingdom I know of no quality better than thi
growth,—nor any quality that will atone for it
absence.

PARSNIPS.—They ran the race with an inde

scribable vehemence that fairly threw the beets into the shade. They trod so delicately at first that I was quite unprepared for such enthusiasm. Lacking the red veining, I could not distinguish them from the weeds with any certainty, and was forced to let both grow together till the harvest. So both grew together, a perfect jungle. But the parsnips got ahead, and rushed up gloriously, magnificently, bacchanalianly,—as the winds come when forests are rended,—as the waves come when navies are stranded. I am, indeed, troubled with a suspicion that their vitality has all run to leaves, and that, when I go down into the depths of the earth for the parsnips, I shall find only bread of emptiness. It is a pleasing reflection that parsnips cannot be eaten till the second year. I am told that they must lie in the ground during the winter. Consequently it cannot be decided whether there are any or not till next spring. I shall in the meantime assume and assert, without hesitation or qualification, that there are as many tubers below the surface as there are leaves above it. I shall thereby enjoy a pleasant consciousness, and the respect of all, for the winter; and if disappointment awaits me in the spring, time will

have blunted its keenness for me, and other people will have forgotten the whole subject. You may be sure I shall not remind them of it.

CUCUMBERS.—The cucumbers came up so far, and stuck. It must have been innate depravity, for there was no shadow of reason why they should not keep on as they began. They did not. They stopped growing in the prime of life. Only three cucumbers developed, and they hid under the vines so that I did not see them till they were become ripe, yellow, soft, and worthless. They are unwholesome fruit at best, and I bore their loss with great fortitude.

TOMATOES.—Both dead. I had been instructed to protect them from the frost by night and from the sun by day. I intended to do so ultimately, but I did not suppose there was any emergency. A frost came the first night and killed them, and a hot sun the next day burned up all there was left. When they were both thoroughly dead, I took great pains to cover them every night and noon. No symptoms of revival appearing to reward my efforts, I left them to shift for themselves. I did not think there was any need of their dying in the first place; and if they would be so absurd as to die without provocation, I did not see the

necessity of going into a decline about it. Besides, I never did value plants or animals that have to be nursed, and petted, and coaxed to live. If things want to die, I think they 'd better die. Provoked by my indifference, one of the tomatoes flared up, and took a new start, —put forth leaves, shot out vines, and covered himself with fruit and glory. The chickens picked out the heart of all the tomatoes as soon as they ripened, which was of no consequence, however, as they had wasted so much time in the beginning that the autumn frosts came upon them unawares, and there would n't have been fruit enough ripe to be of any account, if no chicken had ever broken a shell.

SQUASHES.—They appeared above-ground, large-lobed and vigorous. Large and vigorous appeared the bugs, all gleaming in green and gold, like the wolf on the fold, and stopped up all the stomata and ate up all the parenchyma, till my squash-leaves looked as if they had grown for the sole purpose of illustrating net-veined organizations. In consternation I sought again my neighbor the Englishman. He assured me he had 'em on his, too,—lots of 'em. This reconciled me to mine. Bugs are not inherently desirable, but a universal bug does not

indicate special want of skill in any one. So I was comforted. But the Englishman said they must be killed. He had killed his. Then I said I would kill mine, too. How should it be done? Oh, put a shingle near the vine at night, and they would crawl upon it to keep dry, and go out early in the morning and kill 'em. But how to kill them? Why, take 'em right between your thumb and finger and crush 'em!

As soon as I could recover breath, I informed him confidentially, that, if the world were one great squash, I would n't undertake to save it in that way. He smiled a little, but I think he was not overmuch pleased. I asked him why I could n't take a bucket of water and dip the shingle in it and drown them. He said, well, I could try it. I did try it,—first wrapping my hand in a cloth to prevent contact with any stray bug. To my amazement, the moment they touched the water they all spread unseen wings and flew away, safe and sound. I should not have been much more surprised to see Halicarnassus soaring over the ridge-pole. I had not the slightest idea that they could fly. Of course I gave up the design of drowning them. I called a council of war. One said I must put a newspaper over them and fasten it

down at the edges; then they could n't get in. I timidly suggested that the squashes could n't get out. Yes, they could, he said,—they 'd grow right through the paper. Another said I must surround them with round boxes with the bottoms broken out; for, though they could fly, they could n't steer, and when they flew up they just dropped down anywhere, and as there was on the whole a good deal more land on the outside of the boxes than on the inside, the chances were in favor of their dropping on the outside. Another said that ashes must be sprinkled on them. A fourth said lime was an infallible remedy. I began with the paper, which I secured with no little difficulty; for the wind—the same wind, strange to say—kept blowing the dirt at me and the paper away from me; but I consoled myself by remembering the numberless rows of squash-pies that should crown my labors, and May took heart from Thanksgiving. The next day I peeped under the paper, and the bugs were a solid phalanx. I reported at head-quarters, and they asked me if I killed the bugs before I put the paper down. I said no, I supposed it would stifle them,—in fact, I did not think any thing about it, but if I had thought any thing, that

was what I thought. I was not pleased to find I had been cultivating the bugs and furnishing them with free lodgings. I went home, and tried all the remedies in succession. I could hardly decide which agreed best with the structure and habits of the bugs, but they throve on all. Then I tried them all at once and all o'er with a mighty uproar. Presently the bugs went away. I am not sure that they would not have gone just as soon if I had let them alone. After they were gone, the vines scrambled out and put forth some beautiful, deep-golden blossoms. When they fell off, that was the end of them. Not a squash,—not one,—not a single squash,—not even a pumpkin. They were all false blossoms. . . .

But why do I thus linger over the sad recital? . . . There may have been, there probably was, an abundance of sweet-corn, but the broom-stick that had marked the spot was lost, and I could in no wise recall either spot or stick. Nor did I ever see or hear of the peas,—or the beans. If our chickens could be brought to the witness-box, they might throw light on the subject. As it is, I drop a natural tear, and pass on to

THE FLOWER GARDEN.—It appeared very

much behind time,—chiefly Roman wormwood. I was grateful even for that. Then two rows of four-o'clocks became visible to the naked eye. They are cryptogamous, it seems. Botanists have hitherto classed them among the Phænogamia. A sweet-pea and a china-aster dawdled up just in time to get frost-bitten. "*Et præterea nihil.*" (Virgil: means, "That 's all.") I am sure it was no fault of mine. I tended my seeds with assiduous care. My devotion was unwearied. I was a very slave to their caprices. I planted them just beneath the surface in the first place, so that they might have an easy passage. In two or three days they all seemed to be lying round loose on the top, and I planted them an inch deep. Then I did n't see them at all for so long that I took them up again, and planted them half-way between. It was of no use. You cannot suit people or plants that are determined not to be suited.

Yet, sad as my story is, I cannot regret that I came into the country and attempted a garden. It has been fruitful in lessons, if in nothing else. I have seen how every evil has its compensating good. When I am tempted to repine that my squashes did not grow, I reflect, that, if they had grown, they would

probably have all turned into pumpkins, or if they had staid squashes, they would have been stolen. When it seems a mysterious Providence that kept all my young hopes underground, I reflect how fine an illustration I should otherwise have lost of what Kossuth calls the solidarity of the human race,—what Paul alludes to, when he says, if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it. I recall with grateful tears the sympathy of my neighbors on the right hand and on the left,—expressed not only by words, but by deeds. In my mind's eye, Horatio, I see again the baskets of apples, and pears, and tomatoes, and strawberries,—squashes too heavy to lift,—and corn sweet as the dews of Hymettus, that bore daily witness of human brotherhood. I remember, too, the victory which I gained over my own depraved nature. I saw my neighbor prosper in everything he undertook. *Nihil tetigit quod non crevit.* Fertility found in his soil its congenial home, and spanned it with rainbow hues. Every day I walked by his garden and saw it putting on its strength, its beautiful garments. I had not even the small satisfaction of reflecting that, amid all his splendid success, his life was cold and cheerless, while mine, amid

all its failures, was full of warmth,—a reflection which, I have often observed, seems to go a great way towards making a person contented with his lot,—for he had a lovely wife, promising children, and the whole village for his friends. Yet, notwithstanding all these obstacles, I learned to look over his garden-wall with sincere joy.

There is one provocation, however, which I cannot yet bear with equanimity, and which I do not believe I shall ever meet without at least a spasm of wrath, even if my Christian character shall ever become strong enough to preclude absolute tetanus; and I do hereby beseech all persons who would not be guilty of the sin of Jeroboam who made Israel to sin, who do not wish to have on their hands the burden of my ruined temper, to let me go quietly down into the valley of humiliation and oblivion, and not pester me, as they have hitherto done from all parts of the North-American continent, with the infuriating question, "How did you get on with your garden?"

—*Country Living and Country Thinking.*

## ELIZABETH WHITFIELD BELLAMY.

(BORN, 1838.)

### TILLY BONES.

DIRE need of a cook made me acquainted with Tilly Bones. The sable Mrs. Nancy Logan, who had presided over my kitchen—and myself—during the six months previous to Tilly's reign, having invested her wages in a marble-top bureau and a second-hand rug, left me, "one morning without any warning," to set up housekeeping for herself. A short season of anarchy followed her departure, during which I was a prey to the ignorance and incapacity of three or four different applicants for the government of my kitchen, each of whom, in turn, dismissed herself, and thus spared me the necessity of deciding whether or not I should retain any one of these incompetents. But the mistress of the house is very apt to think even a poor cook better than no

cook at all, if the labor of dinner devolves upon herself, and I was in a state of desperation when Tilly Bones presented herself as a candidate for the vacant office.

It was a delightful morning in the early spring, and on such a morning a woman of horticultural tastes is much happier out of doors than in the house; but for this, I am inclined to think, I should not have admitted Tilly to my kitchen, for the expression of her countenance was sullen and vengeful *à faire peur*. However, in other respects she was a comely enough young negro woman, tall, slim, and tidy; therefore, reflecting that I might wait longer and fare worse, I engaged her services. I had had experience to teach me that a cook may smile and smile, and be a villain, so I hoped that signs might go by contraries in Tilly's case. Nor were my hopes disappointed. Her sullen gloom of countenance did by no means betoken the inward spirit, for Tilly possessed a power of grin and chuckle beyond any young African that ever I saw. She was a genuine plantation darkey, untamed by that *bizarre* form of civilization developed in the negro that dwells in cities; and her quaint originality and keen observation furnished me

unfailing amusement. For Tilly was neither shy nor reticent. I found her "garrulously given, a babbler in the land," and I became the repository of her opinions and experiences.

As to her name, her "krizten" name, as she called it, was unmistakably Tilly; and another name she had which certainly began with a B, but owing to her peculiar utterance this remained to me a mystery forever, and therefore I took the liberty of calling her Bones, partly because this was as near as I could attain to the name she gave, and partly because of her extreme angularity. Inasmuch as she had, from the beginning of our acquaintance, dignified my own name with the prefix of Mac, we could consider ourselves quits on that score. I acquiesced in the accession of a syllable with secret amusement, and she accepted her new appellation with an appreciative grin. Evidently she considered it a distinction to have a name so difficult of pronunciation.

"Hit's a easier name to say, *Bones* is," she commented, with patronizing indulgence for my inability to catch the proper sound; "en ef you knows hit, Miz McAnderson, en me knows hit, why, hit's all squay." (This is as near as

phonetic spelling can come to Tilly's "square.") "Hit ain't Pawndus's name, Bones ain't; but," she continued, consoling, "*you* ain't got no 'casion fur ter call Pawndus, noway, *fur I, rekin Pawndus ain't comin' 'roun' whey dey is a boss.* So hit doan mek no diffunce; en ef you's minded fur ter say Bones, Miz McAnderson, why I ain't no ways cawntrairy."

Tilly talked a great deal about this "Pawndus." He was her husband, and a very terrible reality at times. He was directly responsible for Tilly's sour and sullen 'havior of the visage, as I soon discovered.

I should explain that in this part of the world servants' rooms are useless appendages to any establishment. Not one woman in a hundred who is willing to "hire out" by the month can be induced to take a room on the employer's premises; one and all, they would rather walk any distance through any weather, and Tilly was no exception to the general rule. I offered her a room that had the advantage of being detached from my dwelling-house, a room that was, I have no doubt, infinitely more comfortable than the shanty she occupied on the other side of town. But though I extended the privilege of a domicile to "Pawn-

dus" also, Tilly stoutly refused; and, rain or shine, heat or cold, sick or well, she tramped her mile back and forth, so long as she remained in my service.

She came to her work one morning with a countenance so lowering that I was constrained to inquire what was the matter. To which Tilly, with lips projecting, made answer in this wise:

"Pawndus he——" then followed an inarticulate mumble.

Now I had heard, in a roundabout way, from a lady who had once employed Tilly, that Pondus was given to wife-beating, and I had asked Tilly about this. But she had indignantly denied it: "Pawndus knowed better, he did, den ter tech her." Nevertheless, on the morning I speak of, I had my suspicions as to what had happened, but I only said:

"I don't understand you, Tilly. Is Pondus sick, or are you sick?"

A faint flicker of a smile, that wondrous smile of hers, that was like a sunburst from behind a thunder-cloud, played over her dusky features as she answered:

"'Speck Pawndus sick 'nuff jez 'bout now." And then her smiled vanished, and her lips again stuck out amazingly, as she continued

in a grumbling tone: "'N'as fum me, might jez well be sick; my arm dat lame, can't lif pot-lid."

"What is the matter with your arm?"

"Well, Miz McAnderson, fac' is, you see, Pawndus he do git perpetuil, times; 'n' las' night he done let loose on me wid de tongs. Dat 's what matter wid my arm."

"I will give you some arnica for it, Tilly. But I thought Pondus did not beat you?"

"No, Miz McAnderson," said Tilly, solemnly shaking her head, "I ain't nuver said Pawndus *doan* beat me *no time*. But, you see, w'en I wuz livin' to Miz Ginnie Vine's, Miz Ginnie she sot a heap by me, Miz Ginnie did, en' Mr. Vine he 'lowed efen Pawndus dared to tech me, he'd jez war him clean plum out; 'n' Pawndus—" (here a gleeful chuckle)—"he so skeered Mr. Vine, he done broke hisse'f dat foolishness. Praise de Lawd, I mek sho' he same ez forgit all 'bout beaten me, 'n' I warn't gwine lay no pas' doin's aginst him; but here, now, come las' night, debbil in him done broke out fresh. Tink Mr. Vine ain't yere 'bout hit."

"Does he drink?" I asked.

"No, Miz McAnderson, nuttin' but debbil in him," she responded gloomily.

"Why don't you go down to the mayor, and

have him bound over to keep the peace?" I counselled.

"Kee, he! Miz McAnderson! You doan know nuttin'!" cackled Tilly, forgetting her bruises so far as to double up with laughter. "Me go carry complain', caws money; git me 'noder beaten, w'en I go home; den mebbe put Pawndus in jail. Nigger doun mine jail; nuttin' ter do, an' Pawndus outen wuk—dat 's what 's matter wid dat nigger now—den he come outen jail and beat me 'gin. Tell you, Miz McAnderson, dat sort doin's cawses money, dey do. Now, one time I waz mad wid a gal, en we fout, 'n' I stobbed her. I waz dat mad 'peared like I could n't see; en den, w'en de blood hit come, de sorry en de skeered tergyedder jez swallered up de mad. Den de sing out 'Perlice!' en yere we go to de mare, en money ter pay. Me 'n' dat gal 's been good friends sence dat time. No, I ainter gwine ter no mare; I knows better w'at ter do wid dat nigger Pawndus, den dat. I done come by Aunt Becky's, dis yer mawnin', en I 'low she 'll mek Pawndus 'pent."

"And who is Aunt Becky?" I asked, with some vague notion that Aunt Becky might be in the dread secrets of African sorcery.

"Aunt Becky, she 's he maw. Eve'y time Pawndus he whack me, Aunt Becky she whack Pawndus; caze he 's her chile, en she 's boun' ter raise him right; en I 'low effen he ain't raised *yit*, she 'll keep on spilin' de rods tell he is."

Tilly's special aversion was a black Spanish rooster that was disposed to make himself too much at home in her kitchen. To hear her vituperate "Rosker Wye," as she called the namesake of the apostle of æstheticism, one might have supposed she was trying to manage a team of refractory oxen. She had a voice of wonderful compass, and she could utter the deepest bass notes with a startling volume that ought to have frightened the adventurous Oscar out of his feathers. When remonstrated with for making such a noise, she answered:

"Dullaw, Miz McAnderson, how I gwine mek dat beas' move, douten I hollers? Bleedged ter holler. You see I wuz raise on plantation, en plantation nigger boun' to holler at beases."

"Were you really raised on a plantation, Tilly?"

"Now, Miz McAnderson," answers Tilly,

with a grin, "you know I ain't lak no town nigger? Tubbe sho, I was raise on plantation! My ole miss, she wuz Miz Sunberry, Dr. Joe Martin's sister, over in Mon'gom'ry, whey I wuz raise. But den I war n't nuver lak I had n't nuver been no whar, nur never seen nuthin', caze how, my ole miss, she come ter plantation, en she see me wuz peart-lak, 'n' she say" (and here Tilly toned down her voice in exquisite burlesque of mimicry), "'Tilly you git up on my kerrige, I tek you to toun, wait on Miz Sissy.' Dat wuz ole miss dawter; you know her, Miz McAnderson, w'at married Capen Rogers. I go roun' Mon'gom'ry town heaps er places, tote messajums, cyar bundles; den I go back ter plantation, pick cotton same 's best on 'em. Now you kin see heaps er cullud pussons ter-day, Miz McAnderson, doan know nuttin' 'bout pickin' cotton, nuver heerd tell 'bout cotton, nuver seed cotton stalk; come ter toun, furgit plantation, *can't* 'member dey wuz slaves. I has seed cullud fokeses in dis yer Mobile w'at 's got gray in dey hyar, en *dey* doan 'member nuttin' 'bout slave'y. Now *I* 'members, en I ain't so ole, nuther. I wuz little gal, dem times, en my ole miss wuz good ter me; w'at I gwine furgit fur? I 'members all 'bout planta-

tion, en I 'members *dis* in 'tickler," continues Tilly, who, however far she might wander, always returned, in the end, to the point in question, "beas-critters is de same as dey wuz deef, w'en you talk gemmen to 'em, dey ain't pay no 'tention. I see Mars. Dan come ter plantation, one time, git on mule ter ride, *'en* he spur, *'en* he switch, *'en* he cluck; mule stan' still in he tracks; come 'long, Brer Jim, 'en he say, 'Hi, Mars. Dan! want mule ter move talk to him like nigger.' Now, effen I talk gemmen ter Rosker Wye, he not gwine ruffle he tail feather." Then with sudden and startling change of voice: "Huah! Huah! Git outen yer, ole Rosker Wye!" And away flies the bird, while Tilly says, triumphantly, "See dat, now, Miz McAnderson? W'at I done tell you?"

Tilly would talk as long as I would listen. "Now, Miz McAnderson," continued she, while shelling peas for dinner, "I ain't noways 'shamed o' my raisin, nor my people; but hit do 'pear to me dat plantation niggers can't nuver git no higher up in de gre't house den de kitchen. Now, you jez tek me. I 'tens ter yo' kitchen, en sweeps, en does yo' cookin' same ez yer tell me"—(Alas! not always, Tilly)—"'en I *wuks;* but hit do 'pear like dat 's all!

I can't *nuver* 'member 'zac'ly 'bout combly." (No, she never could). "Now, fust time I hired out I wuz house-gal to Miz Carmack—you know *her*, Miz McAnderson, w'at lives on Govern*ment* Street in dat big brick house. Mighty fine house, en Miz Carmack mighty fine lady, mighty good ter me; on'y somehow, I nuver could 'member to un'erstan' jez w'at she tell me. I had ter go ter de do'-bell, combly all de time in dat house, too much combly; en hit did beat me ter git at de straight uv it. Now think ov sich a way uv things ez dis yer, w'at I gwine tell you. Oner day, do'-bell ring, Tilly jump, open do', en dere stan' fine lady. Well, mebbe she mouten be 's fine ez *some*, but she have gloves, en paysol, en lace, en feaders, en big rose in her bawnet, so I say, 'yes ma'am, Miz Carmack she home; step inter de pawler.' En she say, 'Tell her it 's Louwheeze.' En praise de Lawd! W'en I done tell Miz Carmack, she jez scream out laaffen, en she say—" (and here Tilly resorted to indescribable mimicry)—"'Tilly, you goose! doan you know Lou-wheeze is de seamsteress? W'at you done ax her in de pawler fur, en Miz Fannie'—dat's Miz Carmack's dawter, you know, Miz McAnderson—'a 'tainin' uv er gemmen? Tilly, you

mus'n' nuver 'vite seamsteresses en biznis pussons dat way in de pawler.' So, den, come nex' time, I 'm boun' I 'm right. Dere come a po'-lookin' ole 'oman, all double-up *so*, same 's you see me hump myse'f, en a ole black dress, en a ole shawl, en sich a po' ole bawnet, en so I say, 'yes, ma'am, jez you seddown yer in de hall till I gwine tell Miz Carmack.' *Dis time* I mek sho w'at I had de biznis pusson. But Miz Carmack, she nuver laaf a bit, dis time; she wuz mad fur sho! Her face git red, same 's tukky-gobbler, *en* she flew down stays, *en* she grob dat po' ole biznis-lookin' pusson, *en* she kiss her, she did—'t was ole Miz Somers, *you* know *her*, Miz McAnderson—en she say, *fine*, same lak w'at ladies talks in de pawler, 'Dat *stew-ped*, stew-ped Tilly, not ter ax you inter de pawler.' Now, Miz McAnderson, how I gwine 'cern de fac'?" asks Tilly, pathetically.

Tilly was an arrant coquette, and though she professed to stand in salutary dread of Pondus's displeasure, she could never resist an opportunity to exercise her powers of fascination. She carried on lively flirtations with the wood-sawyer, the coal-driver, and the grocer's man—with all gentlemen of color who came and went on the various errands pertaining to

my housekeeping. When I asked her what Pondus would say to such behavior, she answered with a giggle that "Pawndus he 'd git hine her wid a knife."

"But, dullaw, sho, now, Miz McAnderson," continues Tilly on such occasions, "how Pawndus gwine yere 'bout it? *Dey* ain't gwine tell, en I ain't gwine tell, en you ain't gwine tell. I allers 'lows ter take all de fun I kin git. Now I see fokeses settin' roun' doleful, 'nuff ter pizen de sunshine, en callin' hit 'ligion. Dat kine 'ligion ain't got no sperret in hit. My 'ligion ain't dat kine."

"What is your religion, Tilly?"

"Kee yi! Now, Miz McAnderson, you boun' ter know w'at I ain't book-larnt. My 'ligion ain't cordin' ter scholarship; hit 's de visitation er de Lawd, same 's er mericle, en hit done struck me w'en I war n't mo'n so high, jez er water toter ter de field-han's; en I ain't never let go on him sence. Dat how come I ain't scairt er nuttin. En my 'ligion ain't dat kine w'at meks doleful."

"Then, I suppose, you are not one of those who think it a sin to dance, Tilly?"

"W'at, *me?*" said Tilly, with sudden, sober amazement. "W'at, de hymn-chune seh, Miz

McAnderson?" And clapping her hands to mark the time, Tilly began to sing, to a wild and sonorous melody, these words:

"Yes! some folks seh dat de Christian dance,
But my Lawd *clars* dat dey doan dance:
Sich er clappin' dey hans,
Sich er ringin' dey feet,
Sence de grace er God do soun' so sweet!"

"No, Miz McAnderson," continued Tilly, abruptly ceasing her singing to give a solemn warning, "some fokeses 'll tell you det ef you dance wid 'screshun, nuttin ain't gwine happen ter you; but doan you put no 'penance 'pon dat; dere ain't no 'screshun in dancin'; you dance, en de debbil gwine git you, *jez ez sho*—'douten 'pentance," she added, as she turned away, "douten mighty, airnest 'pentance."

In spite, however, of the fact that her religion was not of the doleful kind, Tilly Bones occasionally fell a prey to low spirits; but inasmuch as these attacks seldom lasted longer than an hour or two, I never felt called upon to notice them, until, one day, an unusually prolonged attack moved my compassion, or my curiosity, and I asked what was the matter.

"Law, Miz McAnderson," she made answer, with a heavy sigh, "I doan nuver have no fun

yere; hit's so lonesome." (We live in the suburbs.)

"Why, Tilly, I don't understand how you can be lonesome, with your work to do; and I am sure you leave early enough to have a good long evening for frolicking."

"'Tain't dat, Miz McAnderson," said Tilly, sorrowfully; "but you see I doan git der go to no funyall. We 's had so many 's fo' funyalls in our s'iety since I come yer, en I ain't been naire one on 'em. I ain't nuver wored my new *refaleya*."

"What is that?"

"I mean my *fergaleyer*."

And then it dawned upon me that Tilly was at a loss between the two magnificences, "regalia" and "paraphernalia."

"Well, Tilly," I answered, "you can attend the fifth funeral whenever it happens."

"Hit gwine happen ter-morrer," responded Tilly promptly, and with a cheerful grin. "Pawndus he cousin's fust wife's dawter done been sick gwine onter seben weeks, w'en she tuck 'n' died. Had a 'lirium in her hade. Dey ain't nuver sont fumme ter set up wid her; 'ten lak I ain't got no speyunce, but I knowed 'twaz all caze dey mistrusted I was too lively in

my 'ligion. Some dey is w'at sez you mus'n nuver be lively no time; Pawndus's cousin's fust wife's people is jez dat kine; but yere, come night fo' las', dey sont fumme ter sit up wid de cawpse en lead de moanahs."

"'Lead the mourners?'" I repeated, enquiringly.

"*On case* dey allers sends fumme fur dat, caze I goes in airnest, speretyully. Outen 'spec' fur kinship wid Pawndus, dey wuz boun' ter 'vite me, ennyhow; but I 'lowed all 'long dey wuz *bleeged* ter have me futter lead de moanahs. Now I jez *tell* you, Miz McAnderson, mos'er dese yer cullud pussons 'bout dis yer Mobile, dey goes ter de setten-up puorely fur saker de cawfee: but dat waren't de way w'at I wuz brung up, en *I* goes speretyully. W'at good hit gwineter do de cawpse ter set roun' laker row er buzzards on er fence-rail, en yo' hade ter one side squinchin' at de do' fur de cawfee ter come in? I goes in fur 'provin' de 'casion by speretyul songs, en dat's how I iz allers de one dey looks ter, ter lead off de moanahs."

. . . . . .

Like all Africans, Tilly Bones was superstitious; she would not take any thing offered

her with the left hand; she would not cross a spot in the road where a horse had wallowed; and if compelled ever to retrace her steps, she invariably made a cross where she turned, and spat upon it. These and kindred notions made themselves manifest every day. But Tilly had been with me some time before I discovered that the lateness of my breakfast was directly attributable to a superstitious terror that proved unconquerable, and that ultimately lost me Tilly's services.

To all my remonstrances against a late breakfast, and entreaties for an early one, Tilly invariably replied, sometimes pouting, sometimes grinning:

"I gits brekfus' jez soon 's I come; how I gwine git him fo' dat?"

"Then, if you can't come earlier, why can't you make up your mind to take a room on the place?"

Tilly, who had long evaded a direct answer to this question, one day gave me her reasons at some length.

"I tell you dis fer er fac', Miz McAnderson, *hit ain't posserbul;* fur, you see, hit's dis yere way. I 'ze got er wardrow, en er beerow wid er marble kiver w'at teks de shine plum offen

Aunt Nancy Login's beerow; en I done made 'rangements w'en I die, ter will dat beerow to Brer Jim's youngest gal, w'ats name fumme; en dat wardrow, I speks ter be buried in one side, en my cloze in de yoder, fur I ain't no notion er leavin' my 'sessions fur udders go 'joy, en me dead."

At this I laughed.

"Hit's er fac', Miz McAnderson, w'at I tell you," Tilly insisted, with unshaken gravity. "I b'longs ter er s'iety w'at 'll bury you w'en, en w'ey, en how you s'lec's. En w'en er nigger is got fuss-clsss 'sessions, lak dat beerow, en dat wardrow, hit's po' management to be totin' 'em 'roun'. Dat beerow en dat wardrow is gotter have er settled habitation, no matter w'ey I hires out."

This argument was unanswerable, and I returned to the original charge:

"Then, Tilly, you must come earlier. I must have breakfast on the table by half-past seven. If you will come earlier in the morning you can go earlier in the evening."

After a pause, Tilly said with solemnity:

"Miz McAnderson, now I gwine tell you, *fur true*, how come I doan git yere no yearlier." Another solemn pause; then, in a blood-curd-

ling whisper she continued: "Hit's longer dem medicum studyunts. You know dey ketches fokeses fur ter sectionize dem."

"Nonsense, Tilly, I know nothing of the kind. Why, I thought you boasted that your religion delivered you from fear? You have let some one scare you with a foolish story."

"Dat ain't w'at I call scaired, Miz McAnderson," said Tilly, indignantly, "hit's jez se'f-purtection; *hit* ain't got nuttin ter do wid speretyul consarns. 'Ligion doan mix longer medicum studyunts en dere ways, nohow."

"Then, if you believe that nonsense, how is it that you are willing to go home after dark?"

"Dullaw, Miz McAnderson!" said Tilly, with immense condescension towards my lack of intelligence. "Doan you know dey is heaps mo' fokeses prowlin' 'bout atter dark, den dey is yearly in de mawnin'? Now, effen you'd *try* ter consider, you 's bleeged to onerstan' yo'se'f, you is mo' lakly to be gwine out et night, den fo' sun-up, ain't yer, now? Medicum studyunt comerlong atter dark, ketch yer, en yer 'gin er squawk, en somebody sho' ter year; en de medicum studyunt drap loose quick. But go

'long in de gray er de mawnin'—light 'nuff, mebbe, futter see plenty, so's you doan run 'g'inst no tree, nor stumble over no cow; but dere ain't nuffin' ter see, 'cep'in de silence er things; dere ain't no smoke on de housetops, caze ev'rybody fas' ersleep. Way er way 'long yawnder, mebbe, nuther fool, skeer'd 's yo'se'f, scootin' froo de dimness; en yere come de medicum studyunt wid bag, tie you neck en' heel, en' dat fool way over yawnder, w'en he year you squawk, he cut out, so skeered his time gwine come nex'. Medicum studyunt go 'long wid bag over he shoulder, fokeses think yere man wid cawn gwine ter mill, en you jez er smudderin'. No, Miz McAnderson, dat resk is too heavy fumme," Tilly concluded, with a solemn shake of the head.

And so, at last, it came to pass that as nothing could eradicate from Tilly's mind this ghastly terror, that interfered so seriously with my breakfast hour, we parted company. I have always regretted that I did not ask her to describe more minutely the appearance of a "medicum studyunt," for her's was a Dantesque imagination. However, she has left a sufficiently strong impression upon my mind, for never do I see a man with a well-filled sack

"over his shoulder," without an involuntary mental query, accompanied by a shudder that defies reason, as to whether Tilly Bones's bones may n't be inside the sack!

. . . . . .

—*The Manhattan Magazine*, August, 1884.

## MARY MAPES DODGE.[1]

(BORN, 18—?)

### MISS MALONEY ON THE CHINESE QUESTION.

OCH! don't be talkin'. Is it howld on, ye say? An' did n't I howld on till the heart of me was clane broke entirely, and me wastin' that thin ye could clutch me wid yer two hands. To think o' me toilin' like a nager for the six year I 've been in Ameriky—bad luck to the day I iver left the owld counthry! —to be bate by the likes o' them! (faix, and I 'll sit down when I 'm ready, so I will, Ann Ryan; an' ye 'd better be listenin' than drawin' yer remarks). An' is it meself, with five good charácters from respectable places, would be herdin' wid the haythens? The saints forgive me, but I 'd be buried alive sooner 'n put up wid it a day longer. Sure, an' I was the granehorn not to be lavin' at once-t when the missus kim into me kitchen wid her perlaver about the new waiter-man which was brought out from Californy. "He 'll be

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xxiv.

here the night," says she. "And, Kitty, it 's meself looks to you to be kind and patient wid him; for he 's a furriner," says she, a kind o' lookin' off. "Sure, an' it 's little I 'll hinder nor interfare wid him, nor any other, mum," says I, a kind o' stiff; for I minded me how these French waiters, wid their paper collars and brass rings on their fingers, is n't company for no gurril brought up dacent and honest. Och! sorra a bit I knew what was comin' till the missus walked into me kitchen, smilin', and says, kind o' schared, "Here 's Fing Wing, Kitty; an' ye 'll have too much sinse to mind his bein' a little strange." Wid that she shoots the doore; and I, misthrustin' if I was tidied up sufficient for me fine buy wid his paper collar, looks up, and—Howly fathers! may I niver brathe another breath, but there stud a rale haythen Chineser, a-grinnin' like he 'd just come off a tay-box. If ye 'll belave me, the craythers was that yeller it 'ud sicken ye to see him; and sorra stich was on him but a black night-gown over his trowsers, and the front of his head shaved claner nor a copper-biler, and a black tail a-hangin' down from it behind, wid his two feet stook into the haythenestest shoes ye ever set eyes on. Och!

but I was up stairs afore ye could turn about, a-givin' the missus warnin', an' only stopt wid her by her raisin' me wages two dollars, an' playdin' wid me how it was a Christian's duty to bear wid haythens, and taitch 'em all in our power—the saints save us! Well, the ways and trials I had wid that Chineser, Ann Ryan, I could n't be tellin'. Not a blissid thing cud I do, but he 'd be lookin' on wid his eyes cocked up'ard like two poomp-handles; an' he widdout a speck or smitch o' whishkers on him, an' his finger-nails full a yard long. But it 's dyin' ye 'd be to see the missus a-larnin' him, an' he a-grinnin', an' waggin' his pig-tail (which was pieced out long wid some black stoof, the haythen chate!) and gettin' into her ways wonderful quick, I don't deny, imitatin, that sharp, ye 'd be shurprised, an' ketchin' an' copyin' things the best of us will do a-hurried wid work, yet don't want comin' to the knowledge o' the family—bad luck to him!

Is it ate wid him? Arrah, an' would I be sittin' wid a haythen, an' he a-atin' wid drumsticks?—yes, an' atin' dogs an' cats unknownst to me, I warrant ye, which it is the custom of them Chinesers, till the thought made me that sick I could die. An' did n't the crayture prof-

fer to help me a wake ago come Toosday, an me foldin' down me clane clothes for the ironin' an' fill his haythen mouth wid water, an' afore I could hinder, squirrit it through his teeth stret over the best linen tablecloth, and fold it up tight, as innercent now as a baby, the dirrity baste! But the worrest of all was the copyin' he 'd be doin' till ye 'd be dishtracted It 's yerself knows the tinder feet that 's on me since ever I 've bin in this counthry. Well owin' to that, I fell into a way o' slippin' me shoes off when I 'd be settin down to pale the praties, or the likes o' that; an' do ye mind that haythen would do the same thing after me whiniver the missus set him to parin' ap ples or tomaterses. The saints in heaven could n't ha' made him belave he cud kape the shoes on him when he 'd be paylin' any thing.

Did I lave for that? Faix, an' I did n't Did n' he get me into throuble wid my mis sus, the haythen! Ye 're aware yerself how the boondles comin' in from the grocery often contains more 'n 'll go into any thing dacently So, for that matter, I 'd now and then take out a sup o' sugar, or flour, or tay, an' wrap it in pa per, and put it in me bit of a box tucked under the ironin'-blanket, the how it cuddent be bod

derin' any one. Well, what shud it be, but this blessed Sathurday morn, the missus was a-spakin' pleasant an' respec'ful wid me in me kitchen, when the grocer buy comes in, and stands fornenst her wid his boondles; an' she motions like to Fing Wing (which I never would call him by that name nor any other but just haythen)—she motions to him, she does, for to take the boondles, an' emty out the sugar, and what not where they belongs. If ye 'll belave me, Ann Ryan, what did that blatherin' Chineser do but take out a sup o' sugar, an' a han'ful o' tay, an' a bit o' chaze, right afore the missus, wrap 'em into bits o' paper, an' I spacheless wid shurprise, an' he the next minute up wid the ironin'-blanket, an' pullin' out me box wid a show o' bein' sly to put them in. Och! the Lord forgive me, but I clutched it, an' the missus sayin', "O Kitty!" in a way that ud cruddle your blood. "He 's a haythen nager," says I. "I 've found yer out," says she, "I 'll arrist him," says I. "It 's yerself ought to be arristid," says she. "Yer won't," says I, "I will," says she. And so it went, till she give me such sass as I cuddent take from no lady, an, I give her warnin' an' left that instant, an' she a-pointin' to the doore.—*Theophilus and Others.*

## KATHERINE KENT CHILDS WALKER

(BORN, 18—?)

### THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF INANIMATE THINGS

I AM confident, that, at the annunciation o my theme, Andover, Princeton, and Cam bridge will skip like rams, and the little hills o East Windsor, Meadville, and Fairfax, lik lambs. However divinity-schools may refus to "skip" in unison, and may butt and batte each other about the doctrine and origin o *human* depravity, all will join devoutly in th *credo*, I believe in the total depravity of inani mate things.

The whole subject lies in a nutshell, or rathe an apple-skin. We have clerical authority fo affirming that all its miseries were let loos upon the human race by "them greenins" tempting our mother to curious pomologica speculations; and from that time till now— Longfellow, thou reasonest well!—"things ar not what they seem," but are diabolically other

wise,—masked-batteries, nets, gins, and snares of evil.

(In this connection I am reminded of—can I ever cease to remember?—the unlucky lecturer at our lyceum a few winters ago, who, on rising to address his audience, applauding him all the while most vehemently, pulled out his handkerchief, for oratorical purposes only, and inadvertently flung from his pocket three "Baldwins" that a friend had given to him on his way to the hall, straight into the front row of giggling girls.)

My zeal on this subject received new impetus recently from an exclamation which pierced the thin partitions of the country-parsonage, once my home, where I chanced to be a guest.

From the adjoining dressing-room issued a prolonged "Y-ah!"—not the howl of a spoiled child, nor the protest of a captive gorilla, but the whole-souled utterance of a mighty son of Anak, whose amiability is invulnerable to weapons of human aggravation.

I paused in the midst of toilet-exigencies, and listened sympathetically, for I recognized the probable presence of the old enemy to whom the bravest and sweetest succumb.

Confirmation and explanation followed speed-

ily in the half apologetic, wholly wrathful declaration,—"The pitcher was made foolish in the first place." I dare affirm, that, if the spirit of Lindley Murray himself were at that moment hovering over the scene of trial, he dropped a tear, or, better still, an adverbial *ly* upon the false grammar, and blotted it out forever.

I comprehended the scene at once. I had been there. I felt again the remorseless swash of the water over neat boots and immaculate hose; I saw the perverse intricacies of its meanderings over the carpet, upon which the "foolish" pitcher had been confidingly deposited; I knew, beyond the necessity of ocular demonstration, that, as sure as there were "pipe-hole" or crack in the ceiling of the study below, those inanimate things would inevitably put their evil heads together, and bring to grief the long-suffering Dominie, with whom, during my day, such inundations had been of at least bi-weekly occurrence, instigated by crinoline. The inherent wickedness of that "thing of beauty" will be acknowledged by all mankind, and by every female not reduced to the deplorable poverty of the heroine of the following veracious anecdote.

A certain good bishop, on making a tour of inspection through a mission-school of his diocese, was so impressed by the aspect of all its beneficiaries that his heart overflowed with joy, and he exclaimed to a little maiden whose appearance was particularly suggestive of creature-comforts,—"Why, my little girl! you have every thing that heart can wish, have n't you?" Imagine the bewilderment and horror of the prelate, when the miniature Flora McFlimsey drew down the corners of her mouth lugubriously, and sought to accommodate the puffs and dimples of her fat little body to an expression of abject misery, as she replied, —"No, indeed, Sir! I have n't got any—skeleton!"

We who have suffered know the disposition of graceless "skeletons" to hang themselves on "foolish" pitchers, bureau-knobs, cobble-stones, splinters, nails, and, indeed, any projection a tenth of a line beyond a dead level.

The mention of nails is suggestive of voluminous distresses. Country parsonages, from some inexplicable reason, are wont to bristle all over with these impish assailants of human comfort.

I never ventured to leave my masculine rela-

tives to their own devices for more than twenty-four consecutive hours, that I did not return to find that they had seemingly manifested their grief at my absence after the old Hebraic method, ("more honored in the breach than the observance,") by rending their garments. When summoned to their account, the invariable defence has been a vehement denunciation of some particular *nail* as the guilty cause of my woes.

By the way, O Christian woman of the nineteenth century, did it ever enter your heart to give devout thanks that you did not share the woe of those whose fate it was to "sojourn in Mesech and dwell in the tents of Kedar"? that it did not fall to your lot to do the plain sewing and mending for some Jewish patriarch, patriot, or prophet of yore?

Realize, if you can, the masculine aggravation and the feminine long-suffering of a period when the head of a family could neither go down-town, nor even sit at his tent-door, without descrying some wickedness in high places, some insulting placard, some exasperating war-bulletin, some offensive order from head-quarters, which caused him to transform himself instantly into an animated rag-bag. Whereas

in these women-saving days, similar grievances send President Abraham into his cabinet to issue a proclamation, the Reverend Jeremiah into his pulpit with a scathing homily, Poet-Laureate David to the "Atlantic" with a burning lyric, and Major-General Joab to the privacy of his tent, there to calm his perturbed spirit with Drake's Plantation Bitters. In humble imitation of another, I would state that this indorsement of the potency of a specific is entirely gratuitous, and that I am stimulated thereto by no remuneration, fluid or otherwise.

Blessed be this day of sewing-machines for women, and of safety-valves and innocent explosives for their lords!

But this is a digression.

I awoke very early in life to the consciousness that I held the doctrine which we are considering.

On a hapless day when I was perhaps five years old, I was, in my own estimation, intrusted with the family dignity, when I was deposited for the day at the house of a lordly Pharisee of the parish, with solemnly repeated instructions in table-manners and the like.

One who never analyzed the mysteries of a

sensitive child's heart cannot appreciate the sense of awful responsibility which oppressed me during that visit. But all went faultlessly for a time. I corrected myself instantly each time I said, "Yes, Ma'am" to Mr. Simon, and "No, Sir," to Madam, which was as often as I addressed them; I clenched little fists and lips resolutely, that they might not touch, taste, handle, tempting *bijouterie;* I even held in check the spirit of inquiry rampant within me, and indulged myself with only one question to every three minutes of time.

At last I found myself at the handsome dinner-table, triumphantly mounted upon two "Comprehensive Commentaries" and a dictionary, fearing no evil from the viands before me. Least of all did I suspect the vegetables of guile. But deep in the heart of a bland, mealy-mouthed potato lurked cruel designs upon my fair reputation.

No sooner had I, in the most approved style of nursery good-breeding, applied my fork to its surface, than the hard-hearted thing executed a wild *pirouette* before my astonished eyes, and then flew on impish wings across the room, dashing out its malicious brains, I am happy to say, against the parlor-door, but leaving me in

a half-comatose state, stirred only by vague longings for a lodge with "proud Korah's troop," whose destination is unmistakably set forth in the "Shorter Catechism."

There is a possibility that I received my innate distrust of things by inheritance from my maternal grandmother, whose holy horror at the profanity they once provoked from a bosom-friend in her childhood was still vivid in her old age.

It was on this wise. When still a pretty Puritan maiden, my grandame was tempted irresistibly by the spring sunshine to the tabooed indulgence of a Sunday-walk. The temptation was probably intensified by the presence of the British troops, giving unwonted fascination to village promenades. Her confederate in this guilty pleasure was a like-minded little saint; so there was a tacit agreement between them that their transgression should be sanctified by a strict adherence to religious topics of conversation. Accordingly they launched boldly upon the great subject which was just then agitating church-circles in New England.

Fortune smiled upon these criminals against the Blue Laws, until they encountered a wall surmounted by hickory rails. Without inter-

mitting the discussion, Susannah sprang agilely up. Quoth she, balancing herself for one moment upon the summit,—"No, no, Betsey! *I* believe God is the author of sin!" The next she sprang toward the ground; but a salient splinter, a chip of depravity, clutched her Sunday-gown, and converted her incontinently, it seems, into a confessor of the opposing faith; for history records, that, following the above-mentioned dogma, there came from hitherto unstained lips,—"The Devil!"

Time and space would, of course, be inadequate to the enumeration of all the demonstrations of the truth of the doctrine of the absolute depravity of things. A few examples only can be cited.

There is melancholy pleasure in the knowledge that a great soul has gone mourning before me in the path I am now pursuing. It was only to-day, that, in glancing over the pages of Victor Hugo's greatest work, I chanced upon the following:—"Every one will have noticed with what skill a coin let fall upon the ground runs to hide itself, and what art it has in rendering itself invisible; there are thoughts which play us the same trick," etc., etc.

The similar tendency of pins and needles is

universally understood and execrated,—their base secretiveness when searched for, and their incensing intrusion when one is off guard.

I know a man whose sense of their malignity is so keen, that, whenever he catches a gleam of their treacherous lustre on the carpet, he instantly draws his two and a quarter yards of length into the smallest possible compass, and shrieks until the domestic police come to the rescue, and apprehend the sharp little villains. Do not laugh at this. Years ago he lost his choicest friend by the stab of just such a little dastard lying in ambush.

So also every wielder of the needle is familiar with the propensity of the several parts of a garment in the process of manufacture to turn themselves wrong side out, and down side up; and the same viciousness cleaves like leprosy to the completed garment so long as a thread remains.

My blood still tingles with a horrible memory illustrative of this truth.

Dressing hurriedly and in darkness for a concert one evening, I appealed to the Dominie, as we passed under the hall-lamp, for a toilet-inspection.

"How do I look, father?"

After a sweeping glance came the candid statement,—

"Beau-tifully!"

Oh, the blessed glamor which invests a child whose father views her "with a critic's eye"!

"Yes, *of course;* but look carefully, please; how is my dress?"

Another examination of apparently severest scrutiny.

"All right, dear! That 's the new cloak, is it? Never saw you look better. Come, we shall be late."

Confidingly I went to the hall; confidingly I entered; since the concert-room was crowded with rapt listeners to the Fifth Symphony, I, gingerly, but still confidingly, followed the author of my days, and the critic of my toilet, to the very uppermost seat, which I entered, barely nodding to my finically fastidious friend, Guy Livingston, who was seated near us with a stylish-looking stranger, who bent eyebrows and glass upon me superciliously.

Seated, the Dominie was at once lifted into the midst of the massive harmonies of the Adagio; I lingered outside a moment, in order to settle my garments and—that woman's look. What! was that a partially suppressed titter

near me? Ah! she has no soul for music! How such ill-timed merriment will jar upon my friend's exquisite sensibilities!

Shade of Beethoven! A hybrid cough and laugh, smothered decorously, but still recognizable, from the courtly Guy himself! What can it mean?

In my perturbation, my eyes fell and rested upon the sack, whose newness and glorifying effect had been already noticed by my lynx-eyed parent.

I here pause to remark that I had intended to request the compositor to "set up" the coming sentence in explosive capitals, by way of emphasis, but forbear, realizing that it already staggers under the weight of its own significance.

That sack was wrong side out!

Stern necessity, proverbially known as "the mother of invention," and practically the stepmother of ministers' daughters, had made me eke out the silken facings of the front with cambric linings for the back and sleeves. Accordingly, in the full blaze of the concert-room, there sat I, "accoutred as I was," in motley attire,—my homely little economies patent to admiring spectators: on either shoulder, bud-

ding wings composed of unequal parts of sarcenet-cambric and cotton-batting; and in my heart—*parricide* I had almost said, but it was rather the more filial sentiment of desire to operate for cataract upon my father's eyes. But a moment's reflection sufficed to transfer my indignation to its proper object,—the sinful sack itself, which, concerting with its kindred darkness, had planned this cruel assault upon my innocent pride.

A constitutional obtuseness renders me delightfully insensible to one fruitful source of provocation among inanimate things. I am so dull as to regard all distinctions between "rights" and "lefts" as invidious; but I have witnessed the agonized struggles of many a victim of fractious boots, and been thankful that "I am not as other men are," in ability to comprehend the difference between my right and left foot. Still, as already intimated, I have seen wise men driven mad by a thing of leather and waxed-ends.

A little innocent of three years, in all the pride of his first boots, was aggravated, by the perversity of the right to thrust itself on to the left leg, to the utterance of a contraband expletive.

When reproved by his horror-stricken mamma, he maintained a dogged silence.

In order to pierce his apparently indurated conscience, his censor finally said, solemnly,—

"Dugald! God knows that you said that wicked word."

"Does He?" cried the baby-victim of reral depravity, in a tone of relief; "then *He* knows it was a doke" (*Anglicè*, joke).

But, mind you, the sin-tempting boot intended no "doke."

The toilet, with its multiform details and complicated machinery, is a demon whose surname is Legion.

Time would fail me to speak of the elusiveness of soap, the knottiness of strings, the transitory nature of buttons, the inclination of suspenders to twist, and of hooks to forsake their lawful eyes, and cleave only unto the hairs of their hapless owner's head. (It occurs to me as barely possible, that, in the last case, the hooks may be innocent, and the sinfulness may lie in *capillary* attraction.)

And, O my brother or sister in sorrow, has it never befallen you, when bending all your energies to the mighty task of "doing" your back-hair, to find yourself gazing inanely at the

opaque back of your brush, while the hand-mirror, which had maliciously insinuated itself into your right hand for this express purpose, came down upon your devoted head with a resonant whack?

I have alluded, parenthetically, to the possible guilt of capillary attraction, but I am prepared to maintain against the attraction of gravitation the charge of total depravity. Indeed, I should say of it, as did the worthy exhorter of the Dominie's old parish in regard to slavery,—"It 's the wickedest thing in the world, except sin!"

It was only the other day that I saw depicted upon the young divine's countenance, from this cause, thoughts "too deep for tears," and, perchance, too earthly for clerical utterance.

From a mingling of sanitary and economic considerations, he had cleared his own sidewalk after a heavy snowstorm. As he stood, leaning upon his shovel, surveying with smiling complacency his accomplished task, the spite of the archfiend Gravitation was raised against him, and, finding the impish slates (had n't Luther some thing to say about "*as many devils as tiles*"?) ready to coöperate, an avalanche was the result, making the last state

of that sidewalk worse than the first, and sending the divine into the house with a battered hat, and an article of faith supplementary to the orthodox thirty-nine.

Prolonged reflection upon a certain class of grievances has convinced me that mankind has generally ascribed them to a guiltless source. I refer to the unspeakable aggravation of "typographical errors," rightly so called,—for, in nine cases out of ten, I opine it is the types themselves which err.

I appeal to fellow-sufferers, if the substitutions and interpolations and false combinations of letters are not often altogether too absurd for humanity.

Take, as one instance, the experience of a friend, who, in writing in all innocency of a session of the Historical Society, affirmed mildly in manuscript, "All went smoothly," but weeks after was made to declare in blatant print, "All went *snoringly!*"

As among men, so in the alphabet, one sinner destroyeth much good.

The genial Senator from the Granite Hills told me of an early aspiration of his own for literary distinction, which was beheaded remorselessly by a villain of this type. By way

of majestic peroration to a pathetic article, h
had exclaimed, "For what would we exchang
the fame of Washington?" — referring,
scarcely need say, to the man of fragrant mem
ory, and not to the odorous capital. The black
hearted little dies, left to their own devices on
night, struck dismay to the heart of the aspiran
author by propounding in black and white
prosaic inquiry as to what would be considere
a fair equivalent for the *farm* of the father o
his country!

Among frequent instances of this depravit
in my own experience, a flagrant example sti
shows its ugly front on a page of a child's book
In the latest edition of "Our Little Girls,
(good Mr. Randolph, pray read, mark, learn
and inwardly digest,) there occurs a descriptio
of a christening, wherein a venerable divine i
made to dip "his *head*" into the consecratin
water, and lay it upon the child.

Disembodied words are also sinners and th
occasions of sin. Who has not broken th
Commandments in consequence of the provoca
tion of some miserable little monosyllable clud
ing his grasp in the moment of his direst need
or of some impertinent interloper thrustin
itself in to the utter demoralization of hi

well-organized sentences? Who has not been covered with shame at tripping over the pronunciation of some perfectly simple word like "statistics," "inalienable," "inextricable," etc., etc., etc.?

Whose experience will not empower him to sympathize with that unfortunate invalid, who, on being interrogated by a pious visitor in regard to her enjoyment of means of grace, informed the horror-stricken inquisitor,—"I have not been to church for years, I have been such an *infidel*,"—and then, moved by a dim impression of wrong somewhere, as well as by the evident shock inflicted upon her worthy visitor, but conscious of her own integrity, repeated still more emphatically,—"No; I have been a confirmed infidel for years."

But a peremptory summons from an animated nursery forbids my lingering longer in this fruitful field. I can only add an instance of corroborating testimony from each member of the circle originating this essay.

The Dominie *loq.*—"Sha'n't have any thing to do with it! It 's a wicked thing! To be sure, I do remember, when I was a little boy, I used to throw stones at the chip-basket when it upset the cargo I had just laded, and it was a

great relief to my feelings too. Besides, 've told stories about me which were any th but true. I don't remember any thing ab that sack."

Lady-visitor *loq.*—"The first time I was vited to Mr. ———'s, (the Hon. —— ———'s, you know,) I was somewhat anxi but went home flattering myself I had mac creditable impression. Imagine my conste tion, when I came to relieve the pocket of gala-gown, donned for the occasion, at dis ering among its treasures a tea-napkin, mar gorgeously with the Hon. ——— ———'s f ily-crest, which had maliciously crept into depths in order to bring me into disgrace have never been able to bring myself to point of confession, in spite of my subsequ intimacy with the family. If it were not Joseph's positive assertion to the contrar should be of the opinion that his cup of div tion conjured itself deliberately and sinf into innocent Benjamin's sack."

Student *loq.* (Testimony open to critici —"Met pretty girl on the street yester Sure I had on my 'Armstrong' hat when I home,—sure as fate; but when I went to it off,—by the crown, of course,—to bow

retty girl, I smashed in my beaver! How it ot there don't know. Knocked it off. Pretty irl picked it up and handed it to me. Conounded things, any way!"

Young divine *loq.*—"While I was in the rmy, I was in Washington on 'leave' for two r three days. One night, at a party, I became tterly bewildered in an attempt to converse, fter long *desuetude*, with a fascinating woman. went stumbling on, amazing her more and nore, until finally I covered myself with glory y the categorical statement that in my opinion General McClellan could 'never get across the Peninsula without a *fattle;* I beg pardon, Madam! what I mean to say is, without a *ight.*'"

School-girl *loq.*—"When Uncle ——— was President, I was at the White House at a state-inner one evening. Senator ——— came ushing in frantically after we had been at able some time. No sooner was he seated han he turned to Aunt to apologize for his elay; and, being very much heated, and very nuch embarrassed, he tugged away desperately t his pocket, and finally succeeded in extracting a huge blue stocking, evidently of home-manufacture, with which he proceeded to wipe

his forehead very energetically and very c
spicuously. I suppose the truth was that t
poor man's handkerchiefs were 'on a strik
and thrust forward this homespun stocking
bring him to terms."

School-girl, No. 2, *loq.*—"My last term at
I was expecting a box of 'goodies' from hon
So when the messsage came, 'An expre
package for you, Miss Fanny!' I invited
my specials to come and assist at the openi
Instead of the expected box, there appeared
misshapen bundle, done up in yellow wrappi
paper. Four such dejected-looking dams
were never seen before as we, standing arou
the ugly old thing. Finally, Alice suggested,

"'Open it!'

"'Oh, I know what it is,' I said; 'it is n
old Thibet, that mother has had made over f
me.'

"'Let 's see,' persisted Alice.

"So I opened the package. The first thi
I drew out was too much for me.

"'What a funny-looking basque!' exclaim
Alice. All the rest were struck dumb with d
appointment.

"No! not a basque at all, but a man's bla
satin waistcoat! and next came objects abo

hich there could be no doubt,—a pair of ingy old trousers, and a swallow-tailed coat! magine the chorus of damsels!

"The secret was, that two packages lay in ather's office,—one for me, the other for those verlasting freedmen. John was to forward ine. He had taken up the box to write my ddress on it, when the yellow bundle tumbled ff the desk at his feet and scared the wits out f his head. So I came in for father's second-and clothes, and the Ethiopians had the goodies'!"

Repentant Dominie *loq.*—"I don't approve f it at all; but then, if you must write the icked thing, I heard a good story for you o-day. Dr. ——— found himself in the pulpit f a Dutch Reformed Church the other Sunday. ou know he is one who prides himself on his daptation to places and times. Just at the ose of the introductory services, a black gown ing over the arm of the sofa caught his eye. Ie was rising to deliver his sermon, when it orced itself on his attention again.

"'Sure enough,' thought he, 'Dutch Re-ormed clergymen do wear gowns. I might as ell put it on.'

"So he solemnly thrust himself into the

malicious (as you would say) garment, and wen
through the services as well as he could, con
sidering that his audience seemed singularly
agitated, and indeed on the point of bursting
out into a general laugh, throughout the entir
service. And no wonder! The good Doctor
in his zeal for conformity, had attired himself
in the black cambric duster in which the pulpi
was shrouded during week-days, and had been
gesticulating his eloquent homily with his arms
thrust through the holes left for the pulpit
lamps!"—*The Atlantic Monthly, September*
1864.

## BRET HARTE.[1]

(BORN, 1839.)

### MELONS.

AS I do not suppose the most gentle of readers will believe that anybody's sponsors in baptism ever wilfully assumed the responsibility of such a name, I may as well state that I have reason to infer that Melons was simply the nickname of a small boy I once knew. If he had any other, I never knew it.

Various theories were often projected by me to account for this strange cognomen. His head, which was covered with a transparent down, like that which clothes very small chickens, plainly permitting the scalp to show through, to an imaginative mind might have suggested that succulent vegetable. That his parents, recognizing some poetical significance in the fruits of the season, might have given this name to an August child, was an Oriental

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xxvi.

explanation. That from his infancy, he was fond of indulging in melons, seemed on the whole the most likely, particularly as Fancy was not bred in McGinnis's Court. He dawned upon me as Melons. His proximity was indicated by shrill, youthful voices, as "Ah, Melons!" or playfully, "Hi, Melons!" or authoritatively, "You Melons!"

McGinnis's Court was a democratic expression of some obstinate and radical property-holder. Occupying a limited space between two fashionable thoroughfares, it refused to conform to circumstances, but sturdily paraded its unkempt glories, and frequently asserted itself in ungrammatical language. My window—a rear room on the ground floor—in this way derived blended light and shadow from the court. So low was the window-sill, that had I been the least disposed to somnambulism, it would have broken out under such favorable auspices, and I should have haunted McGinnis's Court. My speculations as to the origin of the court were not altogether gratuitous, for by means of this window I once saw the Past, as through a glass darkly. It was a Celtic shadow that early one morning obstructed my ancient lights. It seemed to belong to an individual

with a pea-coat, a stubby pipe, and bristling beard. He was gazing intently at the court, resting on a heavy cane, somewhat in the way that heroes dramatically visit the scenes of their boyhood. As there was little of architectural beauty in the court, I came to the conclusion that it was McGinnis looking after his property. The fact that he carefully kicked a broken bottle out of the road somewhat strengthened me in the opinion. But he presently walked away, and the court knew him no more. He probably collected his rents by proxy—if he collected them at all.

Beyond Melons, of whom all this is purely introductory, there was little to interest the most sanguine and hopeful nature. In common with all such localities, a great deal of washing was done, in comparison with the visible results. There was always some thing whisking on the line, and always some thing whisking through the court, that looked as if it ought to be there. A fish-geranium—of all plants kept for the recreation of mankind, certainly the greatest illusion—straggled under the window. Through its dusty leaves I caught the first glance of Melons.

His age was about seven. He looked older.

from the venerable whiteness of his head, an
it was impossible to conjecture his size, as h
always wore clothes apparently belonging t
some shapely youth of nineteen. A pair
pantaloons, that, when sustained by a sing
suspender, completely equipped him, forme
his every-day suit. How, with this lavish supe
fluity of clothing, he managed to perform th
surprising gymnastic feats it has been my priv
lege to witness, I have never been able to tel
His "turning the crab," and other minor di
locations, were always attended with succes
It was not an unusual sight at any hour of th
day to find Melons suspended on a line, or t
see his venerable head appearing above th
roofs of the outhouses. Melons knew the exac
height of every fence in the vicinity, its facil
ties for scaling, and the possibility of seizure o
the other side. His more peaceful and quiete
amusements consisted in dragging a disuse
boiler by a large string, with hideous outcrie
to imaginary fires.

Melons was not gregarious in his habits. A
few youth of his own age sometimes calle
upon him, but they eventually became abusive
and their visits were more strictly predatory in
cursions for old bottles and junk which forme

the staple of McGinnis's Court. Overcome by loneliness one day, Melons inveigled a blind harper into the court. For two hours did that wretched man prosecute his unhallowed calling, unrecompensed, and going round and round the court, apparently under the impression that it was some other place, while Melons surveyed him from an adjoining fence with calm satisfaction. It was this absence of conscientious motives that bronght Melons into disrepute with his aristocratic neighbors. Orders were issued that no child of wealthy and pious parentage should play with him. This mandate, as a matter of course, invested Melons with a fascinating interest to them. Admiring glances were cast at Melons from nursery windows. Baby fingers beckoned to him. Invitations to tea (on wood and pewter) were lisped to him from aristocratic back-yards. It was evident he was looked upon as a pure and noble being, untrammelled by the conventionalities of parentage, and physically as well as mentally exalted above them. One afternoon an unusual commotion prevailed in the vicinity of McGinnis's Court. Looking from my window I saw Melons perched on the roof of a stable, pulling up a rope by which one "Tommy," an

infant scion of an adjacent and wealthy house was suspended in mid-air. In vain the female relatives of Tommy congregated in the back yard, expostulated with Melons; in vain the unhappy father shook his fist at him. Secure in his position, Melons redoubled his exertions and at last landed Tommy on the roof. Then it was that the humiliating fact was disclosed that Tommy had been acting in collusion with Melons. He grinned delightedly back at his parents, as if "by merit raised to that bad eminence." Long before the ladder arrived that was to succor him, he became the sworn ally of Melons, and, I regret to say, incited by the same audacious boy, "chaffed" his own flesh and blood below him. He was eventually taken, though, of course, Melons escaped. But Tommy was restricted to the window after that, and the companionship was limited to "Hi Melons!" and "You Tommy!" and Melons to all practical purposes, lost him forever. I looked afterward to see some signs of sorrow on Melons's part, but in vain; he buried his grief, if he had any, somewhere in his one voluminous garment.

At about this time my opportunities of knowing Melons became more extended. I was

engaged in filling a void in the Literature of the Pacific Coast. As this void was a pretty large one, and as I was informed that the Pacific Coast languished under it, I set apart two hours each day to this work of filling in. It was necessary that I should adopt a methodical system, so I retired from the world and locked myself in my room at a certain hour each day, after coming from my office. I then carefully drew out my portfolio and read what I had written the day before. This would suggest some alterations, and I would carefully rewrite it. During this operation I would turn to consult a book of reference, which invariably proved extremely interesting and attractive. It would generally suggest another and better method of "filling in." Turning this method over reflectively in my mind, I would finally commence the new method which I eventually abandoned for the original plan. At this time I would become convinced that my exhausted faculties demanded a cigar. The operation of lighting a cigar usually suggested that a little quiet reflection and meditation would be of service to me, and I always allowed myself to be guided by prudential instincts. Eventually, seated by

my window, as before stated, Melons asserted himself. Though our conversation rarely went further than "Hello, Mister!" and "Ah, Melons!" a vagabond instinct we felt in common implied a communion deeper than words. In this spiritual commingling the time passed, often beguiled by gymnastics on the fence or line (always with an eye to my window) until dinner was announced and I found a more practical void required my attention. An unlooked-for incident drew us in closer relation.

A sea-faring friend just from a tropical voyage had presented me with a bunch of bananas. They were not quite ripe, and I hung them before my window to mature in the sun of McGinnis's Court, whose forcing qualities were remarkable. In the mysteriously mingled odors of ship and shore which they diffused throughout my room, there was lingering reminiscence of low latitudes. But even that joy was fleeting and evanescent: they never reached maturity.

Coming home one day, as I turned the corner of that fashionable thoroughfare before alluded to, I met a small boy eating a banana. There was nothing remarkable in that, but as I neared McGinnis's Court I presently met another small

boy, also eating a banana. A third small boy engaged in a like occupation obtruded a painful coincidence upon my mind. I leave the psychological reader to determine the exact corelation between the circumstance and the sickening sense of loss that overcame me on witnessing it. I reached my room—and found the bunch of bananas was gone.

There was but one that knew of their existence, but one who frequented my window, but one capable of gymnastic effort to procure them, and that was—I blush to say it—Melons. Melons the depredator—Melons, despoiled by larger boys of his ill-gotten booty, or reckless and indiscreetly liberal; Melons—now a fugitive on some neighborhood house-top. I lit a cigar, and, drawing my chair to the window, sought surcease of sorrow in the contemplation of the fish-geranium. In a few moments some thing white passed my window at about the level of the edge. There was no mistaking that hoary head, which now represented to me only aged iniquity. It was Melons, that venerable, juvenile hypocrite.

He affected not to observe me, and would have withdrawn quietly, but that horrible fascination which causes the murderer to revisit the

scene of his crime, impelled him toward my window. I smoked calmly, and gazed at him without speaking. He walked several times up and down the court with a half-rigid, half-belligerent expression of eye and shoulder, intended to represent the carelessness of innocence.

Once or twice he stopped, and putting his arms their whole length into his capacious trousers, gazed with some interest at the additional width they thus acquired. Then he whistled. The singular conflicting conditions of John Brown's body and soul were at that time beginning to attract the attention of youth, and Melons's performance of that melody was always remarkable. But to-day he whistled falsely and shrilly between his teeth. At last he met my eye. He winced slightly, but recovered himself, and going to the fence, stood for a few moments on his hands, with his bare feet quivering in the air. Then he turned toward me and threw out a conversational preliminary.

"They is a cirkis"—said Melons gravely, hanging with his back to the fence and his arms twisted around the palings—"a cirkis over yonder!"—indicating the locality with his foot

—"with hosses, and hossback riders. They is a man wot rides six hosses to onct—six hosses to onct—and nary saddle"—and he paused in expectation.

Even this equestrian novelty did not affect me. I still kept a fixed gaze on Melons's eye, and he began to tremble and visibly shrink in his capacious garment. Some other desperate means—conversation with Melons was always a desperate means—must be resorted to. He recommenced more artfully.

"Do you know Carrots?"

I had a faint remembrance of a boy of that euphonious name, with scarlet hair, who was a playmate and persecutor of Melons. But I said nothing.

"Carrots is a bad boy. Killed a policeman onct. Wears a dirk knife in his boots, saw him to-day looking in your windy."

I felt that this must end here. I rose sternly and addressed Melons.

"Melons, this is all irrelevant and impertinent to the case. *You* took those bananas. Your proposition regarding Carrots, even if I were inclined to accept it as credible information, does not alter the material issue. You took those bananas. The offence under the

Statutes of California is felony. How far Ca
rots may have been accessory to the fact eith
before or after, is not my intention at prese
to discuss. The act is complete. Your prese
conduct shows the *animo furandi* to have bee
equally clear."

By the time I had finished this exordiu
Melons had disappeared, as I fully expected.

He never reappeared. The remorse that
have experienced for the part I had taken
what I fear may have resulted in his utter an
complete extermination, alas, he may not kno
except through these pages. For I have nev
seen him since. Whether he ran away an
went to sea to reappear at some future day
the most ancient of mariners, or whether h
buried himself completely in his trousers,
never shall know. I have read the papers an
iously for accounts of him. I have gone to th
Police Office in the vain attempt of identifyin
him as a lost child. But I never saw him
heard of him since. Strange fears have som
times crossed my mind that his venerable a
pearance may have been actually the result
senility, and that he may have been gathere
peacefully to his fathers in a green old age.
have even had doubts of his existence, and ha

sometimes thought that he was providentially and mysteriously offered to fill the void I have before alluded to. In that hope I have written these pages.—*Mrs. Skaggs's Husbands, and other Sketches.*

## THE SOCIETY UPON THE STANISLAUS.

I reside at Table Mountain, and my name is
Truthful James;
I am not up to small deceit or any sinful games;
And I 'll tell in simple language what I know
about the row
That broke up our Society upon the Stanislow.

But first I would remark, that it is not a proper
plan
For any scientific gent to whale his fellow-man,
And, if a member don't agree with his peculiar
whim,
To lay for that same member for to "put a
head" on him.

Now nothing could be finer or more beautiful
to see
Than the first six months' proceedings of that
same Society,

Till Brown of Calaveras brought a lot of fossi
bones
That he found within a tunnel near the tene
ment of Jones.

Then Brown he read a paper, and he recon
structed there,
From those same bones, an animal that wa
extremely rare ;
And Jones then asked the Chair for a suspensio
of the rules,
Till he could prove that those same bones wa
one of his lost mules.

Then Brown he smiled a bitter smile, and sai
he was at fault,
It seemed he had been trespassing on Jones'
family vault ;
He was a most sarcastic man, this quiet Mr
Brown,
And on several occasions he had cleaned ou
the town.

Now I hold it is not decent for a scientific gen
To say another is an ass,—at least, to all intent
Nor should the individual who happens to b
meant
Reply by heaving rocks at him, to any grea
extent.

Then Abner Dean of Angel's raised a point of order, when
A chunk of old red sandstone took him in the abdomen,
And he smiled a kind of sickly smile, and curled up on the floor,
And the subsequent proceedings interested him no more.

For, in less time than I write it, every member did engage
In a warfare with the remnants of a palæozoic age;
And the way they heaved those fossils in their anger was a sin,
Till the skull of an old mammoth caved the head of Thompson in.

And this is all I have to say of these improper games,
For I live at Table Mountain, and my name is Truthful James;
And I 've told in simple language what I knew about the row
That broke up our Society upon the Stanislow.

—*Poems.*

## WILLIAM L. ALDEN.[1]

(BORN, 1837.)

### GIBBERISH.

IT is estimated that there are at this moment seven million small-boys in this country. Of this number,—if we except those who are deaf, dumb, blind, and idiotic—there is not one who is not familiar with that mystic formula known as "aina maina mona mike," and who does not habitually use it as a means of divining who shall be "it," in the various games incident to boyhood. How each successive generation of small-boys comes into the possession of this formula is one of the most profound and difficult questions of the age.

The superficial thinker fancies that the solution of this problem is a very simple one. He hastily assumes that one generation teaches "aina maina" to its successors, and that the knowledge of the formula is thus handed down from father to son. But is there a single instance on record in which a father has deliber-

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xvii.

ately imparted this knowledge to his son? We all know from our own experience that long before we have arrived at manhood, and become seized and possessed of our personal small-boy, we have forgotten the lore of our childhood, and, hence, are not in a condition to impart it to any one. There always comes a period in our lives when we hear our sons rehearsing "aina maina" with confidence and accuracy, and as we suddenly remember that we, too, once knew those mystic words, we wonder from whence the new generation of small-boys learned them. The fact that fathers do not teach them to their sons will appear so plain, upon a very little reflection, that it is unnecessary to dwell longer upon it at this time. In whatever way the venerable formula comes into the possession of one generation, it is quite certain that it is not learned from the previous generation.

It is a noteworthy fact that no small-boy is ever able to tell from whom he learned "aina maina." If we ask any casual small-boy who taught him the mysterious syllables, he will invariably reply "Dunno," and promptly change the subject. We cannot tell how we ourselves learned them, and all our memory can tell us is

that there was an exceedingly remote period when we did not know them, and a somewhat later period when they were perfectly familiar to us. Here then we have the remarkable phenomenon of an elaborate formula in an unknown tongue, which every boy knows, without knowing from what source he learned it, and as to which we simply know that he does not learn it from the preceding generation. Whence comes this knowledge, and in what way is it handed down through the centuries? This is a problem which Sir ISAAC NEWTON said he "would be hanged if he could solve," and of which COMTE remarked "that it is beyond the limit of our intellectual powers, and hence should not receive the slightest attention."

The ancient sages and philosophers were as much in the dark as to this matter as we are. PLATO mentions that IPHIGENIA was selected for the sacrifice by a soothsayer, who repeated "aina maina" until the lot fell upon that unhappy damsel; and he adds, "that this method of divination was brought to Greece by CADMUS, who doubtless learned it from the barbarians." This may or may not be true, but in either case it throws no light upon the question how the formula has been handed down to

the present day. SOCRATES alluded to the matter once, if not twice, and is reported to have said to ALCIBIADES: "Tell me now, ALCIBIADES, whence did you learn to divine through (or by means of) 'aina maina'?" to which ALCIBIADES replied, "I dunno." "Then," continued the sage, "it is impious for you to ask me how it happened that I was last night banged as to the head with the dirt-devouring broom; for he has no right to propose delicate personal conundrums who is unable, whether through his own dulness or the displeasure of the gods, to answer simple and easy questions in two syllables." This conversation shows that SOCRATES perceived the mystery which enshrouds the subject, but it does not appear that he ever successfully penetrated it

Now, it is evident that if the knowledge of this strange formula is not taught by one generation to another—and we know perfectly well that it is not—it must be developed spontaneously in every small-boy's mind. The small-boy has his measles and chicken-pox, and other strictly juvenile physical diseases, and he ought, by analogy, to have some form of mental disease peculiar to his age. Medical men are well aware that talking in unknown tongues—or

gibbering, as it is usually called—is a symptom of certain forms of brain disease, and it is credibly asserted that most of the remarks made in unknown tongues by the followers of the erratic EDWARD IRVING, were simply repetitions of "aina maina." Let us, then, suppose that when the small-boy suddenly breaks out with the same curious formula, it is a symptom of a juvenile brain disease, just as the eruption which at some time roughens every small-boy's surface is a symptom of chicken-pox. This hypothesis fully explains the whole mystery. No small-boy learns the chicken-pox from his father, and yet every small-boy has it. No small-boy learns "aina maina" from his father, and yet if a small-boy were to be kept in solitary confinement from his birth up to his fourteenth year, he would infallibly break out with the knowledge of "aina maina." When a hypothesis meets all the facts of any given case, it may properly be accepted until another and better hypothesis is devised. The hypothesis that this knowledge of "aina maina" is a symptom of brain disease, stands precisely upon the same ground as the hypothesis of development, and the moment this fact is brought to Professor HUXLEY'S attention he will adopt the one as eagerly as he has adopted the other.—*Shooting Stars.*

## AN UNNECESSARY INVENTION.

Few people have any accurate idea of the immense number of ingenious inventions that are annually patented at Washington. It is creditable to the inventors that for the most part these inventions are intended to serve some really useful end and to meet some obvious want. Nevertheless, there are inventors who appear to have more desire to display their ingenuity than to accomplish any public benefit. Such inventors are akin in spirit to those captious persons who decline to rent a room or an office unless it possesses facilities for swinging a cat, although they have not the remotest intention of ever performing that exciting but frivolous experiment. The Patent Office contains numerous models of machines framed with the utmost skill, but intended for purposes for which no man will ever desire to employ them, or which are hostile to the best interests of the community. We may admire the ingenuity of these machines, but at the same time we must regret that the inventors have wasted or perverted their abilities.

It is to this latter class of inventions that the recently patented "Smith Rolling and Crushing Machine," undoubtedly belongs—unless,

indeed, the nature and object of the invention have been grossly misrepresented. As its name implies, it is obviously intended for diminishing the number of Smiths. It is understood that it consists of a series of heavy rollers resembling those by which iron plates are rolled, and also of a pair of gigantic grindstones of novel pattern and enormous-power, the whole being set in motion by a 12-horse power engine. Its method of operation is at once simple and effective. The operator takes a Smith of any size, and adjusting the gearing of the rollers to the exact width to which it is desired to roll the Smith, gently inserts his head between the rollers. The machine is then set in motion and in the brief space of fifty-eight seconds the Smith is rolled to any desirable degree of thinness. If a Smith is to be crushed, he is placed in a hopper communicating with the grindstones, and after a rapid trituration, varying from two minutes to five minutes, according to the size and toughness of the Smith, he is reduced to a fine and evenly-ground powder in which such foreign substances as buttons or shirt-studs can be detected only by the most delicate chemical tests. The inventor, so it is said, claims that by a very simple mechanical attach-

ment the machine can be made to roll or crush Smythes and Schmidts with equal efficiency, and he is confident that the general principle underlying his invention can be applied to Brown-crushing or Robinson-rolling machines.

Now we may fully appreciate the ingenuity displayed in the conception of the Smith roller and crusher, and the skill with which that conception has been embodied in iron and grindstones. A grave objection, however, can be urged against the invention, and that is that there is no evidence of any existing demand for such a machine. That there is a large quantity of Smiths, not to speak of Smythes and Schmidts, in this country is undeniable. There is, however, no proof that the volume of Smiths is more than commensurate with the necessities of business. It may be conceded that, at certain times, and in certain limited localities, there is an excess of Smiths. A plethora of Smiths in one place, however, implies a corresponding paucity of Smiths in another, and the difficulty soon regulates itself. It may be confidently asserted that the great law of supply and demand can be trusted to preserve the balance of Smiths from any serious disturbance. Hence it is sufficiently plain that there is no

need of a sudden contraction of the volume o
Smiths, and that the Smith roller and crusher i
wholly superfluous.

There is still another objection to th
machine, which is, at least, as serious as tha
already suggested. No one will deny that wer
it desired to contract the volume of Smiths b
a certain definite number, every week or month
the Smith roller and crusher would accomplis
that end with thoroughness and success. A
Smith when once rolled to the uniform thinnes
of a quarter of an inch, or crushed to the fine
ness of ground coffee, would be of no furthe
use as a Smith. But why employ costl
machinery to roll and crush Smiths, when the
could be retired with equal efficiency in a doze
different and less expensive ways? The inven
tor has as yet made no suggestion as to th
possible uses to which a rolled Smith might b
put; neither has he proposed any plan for th
utilization of crushed Smiths. On the othe
hand, it is perfectly evident that one result o
his process would be the financial ruin of th
coffin-makers, who, as is well known, regard th
Smiths as their most valuable clients. Th
more closely the invention is studied, the mor
plainly is it seen that it meets no real want

nd that it proposes to do, in an elaborate and costly way, what might be done more simply nd cheaply. It is an unpleasant task to say to n ingenious inventor, "You have wasted your abor and have produced what is, at best, only curious scientific toy." This, however, must e the universal verdict upon the Smith roller nd crusher. The rich and idle amateur of cience may occasionally amuse himself by roll- ng or crushing Smiths in his private laboratory r workshop, but it is folly to suppose that the nachine will ever come into general use, or hat the inventor or the public will ever reap ny decided benefit from it.—*The Comic Liar.*

## ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.[1]

(BORN, 1844.)

### SELECTIONS FROM AN OLD MAID'S PARADISE.

### I.

#### IN PROSPECT.

"I WANT"—said Corona.

Tom and Susy looked up. Corona did not often say she wanted any thing. Susy thought this natural. Was it not enough to live in the house with Tom? But Tom had never thought any thing about it.

"I want"—began Corona again; and then she stopped. What did she want? Her thoughts were vagabonds. They roamed a great way from Tom and Susy at that moment. They were a lawless, disorganized, hungry horde.

"Nothing for tramps!" said Corona, severely. But she did not say it aloud. She took up the grape-scissors thoughtfully; she showed

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xxxii.

slight contraction between a pair of well-controlled, charitable gray eyes, and snipped the Malagas leisurely upon her plate, before she said,—

"I want a home."

Tom laid down his nut-pick and Susy the baby. It took quite a shock to make Susy put down the baby. Corona colored. Tom was her own brother; but Susy was the mother of her niece.

"Give her to me!" cried Corona, hurriedly. "She 's putting up her lip. You 've hurt her feelings. And oh! Susy, don't mind me a bit. And Tom, you 've always done every thing; but, Susy, the baby won't cry for me more than a day or two, and, Tom, you must see that to have a place of your own ——"

"Get married;" said Tom.

"I can't afford to support a husband, till the panic is over."

"Write a book," said Susy. "It will divert your mind. You 're morbid. The baby has kept you awake too much this winter. *I 'll* take her to-night."

"Experience with three poems, two Sunday-school books, one obituary, and one letter to 'The Transcript,'" said Corona, calmly, meas-

uring off these articles in shag-barks on th table-cloth, "has not encouraged me to pu sue a literary life. If there had not happene to be such a press of matter every time, might have been different. The editors r gretted it exceedingly, Susy; and the man scripts are in the hair trunk in the inner a tic." . . .

"I think if I did not let you draw bab about so much," observed Susy, with a judici expression; "and she is growing so cunning And we meant to put something Eastlake in your room this spring. Did n't we, Tom But we were going to wait for a surprise, t you got home from Aunt Anna Maria's. B sides, Coro, if you are not contented in yo present way of life, you could make yourse very useful by showing a little more interest the Widow's Mite, or the Reform Club, and th sewing-circle, you know—"

When matters got around to the sewin circle, argument ceased to be a sane method conducting conversation. Susy's mind was constructed. Corona sighed. But Tom inte rupted:

"There are depths of human nature, Su which even the sewing-circle will not fill. L

Coro alone. If she wants to go, go she shall. Why should n't she? We went ourselves. You did n't stay because your mother wanted help in scouring the preserves."

"*Scouring preserves?*" began Susy. But Tom laughed and left.

From beyond the front door he heard Susy talking; but it was a mild, safe chatter,—something about marmalade. It was clear that her mind was temporarily diverted in a sweet direction.

Tom had that amount of profound respect for his wife which is involved in a well-assured and well-controlled conjugal affection of several years' hard use. Still, the sight of Susy giving advice to Corona was something which he never found himself able to witness with that gravity which his ideal of his wife demanded.

Coro slid after him. She wore slippers without heels. It was one of her "ways." Her footfall dropped at his side without noise, and he started when she touched him on the elbow.

"Co, what do you look like that for? *I* understand."

"You don't mind, Tom, dear, a bit?"

"Not a mind," said Tom. "Where will you build it, Coro? On Fifth Avenue, Pike's Peak,

or out in my garden? I 'll lease you a lo
Come!"

"If you *do* understand," said Corona, hastil
"then there is no difficulty in the way. Not
ing is hard in the world but hurting people
feelings."

"Perhaps not," said Tom, "unless you cou
in starving, or death at the stake, or a codfis
breakfast, or a few such things. But don
you bother, Co. Go ahead. I 'll stand b
you."

"Tom," replied Corona, "I 'd like to ki
you."

She did not often. At least, she did n
often say so. Tom and Corona had never bee
of "the kissing kind." He took off his hat-
he was in a hurry, too—and they kissed o
another so gravely that Tom was quite emba
rassed. But that was not till afterward, whe
he thought of it.

## II.

### IN PLAN.

Corona had five hundred dollars and so
pluck for her enterprise. She had also at h
command a trifle for furnishing. But tha
seemed very small capital. Her friends

rge discouraged her generously. Even Tom id he did n't know about that, and offered her ree hundred more.

This manly offer she declined in a womanly anner.

"It is to be *my* house, thank you, Tom, dear. can live in yours at home." . . .

Corona's architectural library was small. She ound on the top shelf one book on the con- ruction of chicken-roosts, a pamphlet in ex- anation of the kindergarten system, a cook- ook that had belonged to her grandmother, nd a treatise on crochet. There her domestic terature came to an end. She accordingly ought a book entitled "North American omes"; then, having, in addition, begged or orrowed every thing within two covers relating architecture that was to be found in her im- ediate circle of acquaintance, she plunged to that unfamiliar science with hopeful zeal.

The result of her studies was a mixed one. was necessary, it seemed, to construct the orth American home in so many contradic- ory methods, or else fail forever of life, liberty, nd the pursuit of happiness, that Corona felt erself to be laboring under a chronic aberra- on of mind. . . . Then the plans. Well,

the plans, it must be confessed, Corona *did* find it difficult to understand. She always had found it difficult to understand such things; but then she had hoped several weeks of close architectural study would shed light upon the density of the subject. She grew quite morbid about it. She counted the steps when she went up-stairs to bed at night. She estimated the bedroom post when she waked in the cold gray dawn. . . .

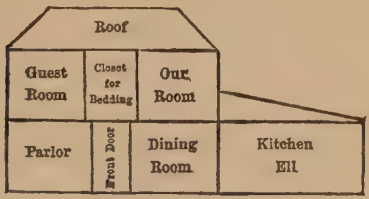
But the most perplexing thing about the plans was how one story ever got upon another. Corona's imagination never fully grappled with this fact, although her intellect accepted it. She took her books down-stairs one night, and Susy came and looked them over.

"Why, these houses are all one-story," said Susy. "Besides, they 're nothing but lines, anyway. I should n't draw a house so."

Corona laughed with some embarrassment and no effort at enlightenment. She was not used to finding herself and Susy so nearly on the same intellectual level as in this instance. She merely asked: "How should you draw it?"

"Why, so," said Susy, after some severe thought. So she took her little blunt lead pencil, that the baby had chewed, and drew her plan as follows:—

SUSY'S PLAN.




Nursery and your room behind.

Corona made no comment upon this plan, except to ask Susy if that were the way to spell L; and then to look in the dictionary, and find that it was not spelled at all. Tom came in, and asked to see what they were doing.

"I 'm helping Corona," said Susy, with much complacency. "These architects' things don't look any more like houses than they do like the first proposition in Euclid; and the poor girl is puzzled."

"*I 'll* help you to-morrow, Co," said Tom, who was in too much of a hurry to glance at his wife's plan. But to-morrow Tom went into town by the early train, and when Corona emerged from her "North American Homes," with wild eye and knotted brow, at 5 o'clock P.M., she found Susy crying over a telegram, which ran:—

Called to California immediately. Those lost cargoes A No. 1 hides turned up. Can't get home to say good-by. Send overcoat and flannels by Simpson on midnight express. Gone four weeks. Love to all. TOM.

This unexpected event threw Corona entirely upon her own resources; and, after a few days more of patient research, she put on her hat, and stole away at dusk to a builder she knew of down-town—a nice, fatherly man who had once built a piazza for Tom and had just been elected superintendent of the Sunday-school. These combined facts gave Corona confidence to trust her case to his hands. She carried a neat little plan of her own with her, the result of several days' hard labor. Susy's plan she had taken the precaution to cut into paper dolls for the baby. Corona found the good man at home, and in her most business-like manner presented her points.

"Got any plan in yer own head?" asked the builder, hearing her in silence. In silence Corona laid before him the paper which had cost her so much toil.

It was headed in her clear black hand:—

PLAN

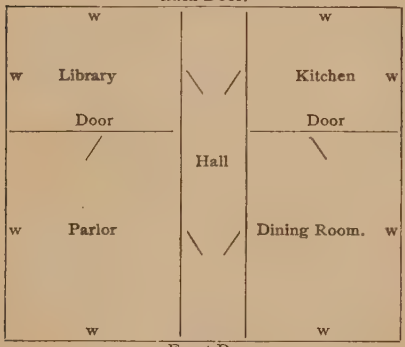
FOR A SMALL BUT HAPPY

HOME.

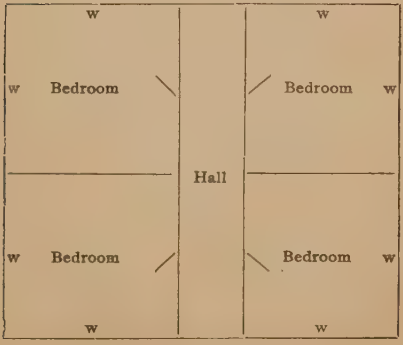
This was

CORONA'S PLAN.

GROUND FLOOR.




SECOND FLOOR.



"Well," said the builder, after a silence,—"well, I 've seen worse."

"Thank you," said Corona, faintly.

"How does she set?" asked the builder.

"Who set?" said Corona, a little wildly. She could think of nothing that set but hens.

"Why, the house. Where 's the points o' compass?"

"I had n't thought of those," said Corona.

"And the chimney," suggested the builder. "Where 's your chimneys?"

"I did n't put in any chimneys," said Corona.

"Where did you count on your stairs?" pursued the builder.

"Stairs? I—forgot the stairs."

"That 's natural," said Mr. Timbers. "Had a plan brought me once without an entry or a window to it. It was n't a woman did it, neither. It was a widower, in the noospaper line. What 's your scale?"

"Scale?" asked Corona, without animation.

"Scale of feet. Proportions."

"Oh! I did n't have any scales, but I thought about forty feet front would do. I have but five hundred dollars. A small house must answer."

The builder smiled. He said he would show

her some plans. He took a book from his table and opened at a plate representing a small, snug cottage, not uncomely. It stood in a flourishing apple-orchard, and a much larger house appeared dimly in the distance, upon a hill. The cottage was what is called a "story-and-half" and contained six rooms. The plan was drawn with the beauty of science.

"There," said Mr. Timbers, "I know a lady built one of those upon her brother-in-law's land. He give her the land, and she just put up the cottage, and they was all as pleasant as pease about it. That 's about what I 'd recommend to you, if you don't object to the name of it."

"What is the matter with the name?" asked Corona.

"Why," said the builder, hesitating, "it is called the Old Maid's House—in the *book*."

"Mr. Timbers," said Corona, with decision, "why should we seek further than the truth? I will have that house. Pray draw me the plan at once."

## III.

### BUILDING.

. . . Fairharbor is in Massachusetts. Corona had spent several seasons there, in the uncertain capacity of "summer folks" and

"perm'nent boarder." Her experience with landladies had been large, varied, and pathetic, and just as she had found one to whom she thought she could be happy to return year by year, the excellent woman—like other people who have reached an unusual pitch of sanctification—died.

Yet what were summer without the sea,—its purpose, its passion, its rapture?

"I will build my house," said Corona, "in Fairharbor."

And so it was settled. To be sure, Susy said she did not see how Corona could decide any thing so important while Tom was away. But, nevertheless, it was settled.

Corona went on to Fairharbor with the builder, to select and lease her land. When I say that it was March, I need add nothing about the weather. Corona felt very independent and very cold. She and the builder stood together on the cliff-side which she had chosen, and yelled at one another through the thunder of the wind and surf. . . .

When they had wandered about in the wind and discussed the matter till Corona was quite hoarse, when she had pointed out to the builder all the locations which she liked, and when the

builder had raised insuperable objections to every one, Corona suggested that if he could find a place not too windy nor too sunny, too hard, too soft, too wet, too dry, too any thing, he should select the spot himself and put the house on it at once.

"All I ask is permission to live in it," said Corona, meekly. "Do as you like. I shall perish if I stay here another minute, and I 've no heir to leave the place to but my sister-in-law, who has neuralgia at the seaside."

"No offence, I hope?" asked Mr. Timbers, anxiously; "but, you see, women-folks *don't* know so much as they might. I 'll blast out this ridge for ye, if ye say so—the house is yours; but it would cost you a hundred more, besides the damp."

"Blast the ridge!" replied Corona. But she saved her good name by an interrogation point. "Blast the ridge? No, we will let the ridge go. Build in the harbor, if you want to; only build, and let me go and get warm." . . .

Soon after her first trip to Fairharbor, Corona went a little way into the country, to visit an old schoolmate with a new baby. One day the baby fell into the fire, and Corona

sprang to pick it out, and sprained her ankle. This gallant deed and its untoward consequence confined her for some weeks to the house. . . .

Meanwhile, the carpenters were at work. Corona had contracted with Mr. Timbers that the cottage should be finished by the middle of May. She had made this provision with a keen sense of the accepted helplessness of her sex in such matters, and a keener desire to be on her guard against the traditional imposition of the builders. She would have expected Mr. Timbers to cheat her, had he not been superintendent of the Sunday-school. And now here she was, wearing upon the delicate health of her hostess; dependent upon the surgery of a more than rural doctor, who said he had *dog-nosed* the case; and reduced entirely to her imagination and the daily mail (it seemed to make every thing worse that it was brought five miles by a stage-coach) for any knowledge of her now sacred and absorbing interests at Fairharbor.

The builder wrote often. One day he asked, Would she have cedar post?

And Corona, whose architectural education was already rusting out, wrote back: "What do I need a cedar post for?"

Another time he said that the A No. 1 shingles he ordered had not come; but, by mistake, only the best pine shingles. He thought he might use those, seeing they were on hand, and he would make it square on the estimate. Corona, in some indignation, telegraphed that, of course, she wanted the best pine shingles under any circumstances.

Mr. Timbers leisurely replied that best shingles did not mean best shingles, and that nothing was best but A No. 1. This was honest but perplexing, and in either light it was lost time.

The next day he sent word that he thought the kitchen closet had better be built in the parlor, and that, if 't was his, he 'd turn the piazza the lee side of the house; that one of his men had hammered a finger off, and one was drunk, and another had a baby to bury, which delayed the work; that he thought he should leave the kitchen unfinished till she got there, on account of the sink and a few such; and that the weather was against them, for it had rained ever since he began.

Then followed a peculiarly harrowing correspondence about details, which at this helpless distance assumed enormous and morbid im-

portance in Corona's mind, and the discussion of which Mr. Timbers always closed with the remark that the weather was against them and it had rained ever since they began. It was invariably bright sunlight when Corona received these letters.

For the first time, she began to wish that Tom were at home to help her; but the Corliss engine could not have wrung from her the acknowledgment of this not unworthy sentiment.

She found a certain relief in occupying herself with preparations for the internal arrangements of her home. Susy had promised (if there were a closet for it) to provide the bedding; and the mother of the baby that fell into the fire kindly agreed to mark the pillow-cases in tambour cotton. Corona felt grateful for the removal of these important burdens. But enough remained. As she lay upon her lounge, in her friend's "spare room," they gathered awful proportions. Things to be done dawned upon her, one at a time, in a diseased, sporadic way. Now it was the fixture of a bedroom curtain. Now a poker for the parlor grate. Then she remembered she had n't any grate to poke. Then, by some incredible psychological caprice, her attention would concentrate itself

upon the clothes-horse. Did clothes-horses grow in Fairharbor? How should she get one from Boston, if they did n't? Suddenly she would be overcome by a fierce anxiety about the nature of waffle-irons, and then she would remember that she must have a broom. In the depths of the night there would mysteriously darken down upon her the consciousness that she could never keep house without salt-cellars. In the sparkle of the dawn she would jerk herself feverishly upright in bed, to wonder if dish-towels came fringed. At moments her whole soul reeled beneath the prospect of getting her sheets marked; and at others the realization of the fact that she must have soft soap for Mondays seemed a burden greater than she could bear. Two things in particular assumed curious and portentous shapes in her imagination. One was the clothes-post, and another was the hogshead for rain-water. How should she get the hogshead? How should she get any rain, if she *had* a hogshead? How could she keep house till she had a clothes-post? And how could she get a clothes-post till she had begun to keep house? Night after night she dreamed of hogsheads and clothes-posts. She waked cold with her efforts to plant the clothes-post in the par-

lor carpet, and weak with attempt to set a lunch-table for sixteen upon the slippery surface of the hogshead. Her mind became a frightful chaos of household detail.

Corona was not of precisely what we call a domestic temperament, and this experience had some distressing effects. There, for instance, were the pin-cushions. One noon it occurred to her that she could not have a house without pin-cushions, and from that unhappy hour her tortured fancy had no rest. She had never made a pin-cushion in her life. It seemed to her that it would be easier to make a man-of-war. Corona was determined to keep the balance of power economical and artistic in her modest home. She would not fill even a cushion with a "dear" stuffing in a cheap house. She would not have emery and silk with matched boards and bare floors. She agitated herself over these appalling questions.

That came, perhaps, of being a woman, she thought. Did men think about pin-cushions when they built houses? Six rooms—six pin-cushions. Six colors for six pin-cushions in six rooms. She tormented herself with calculations. One day she said to her friend:—

"I 'll tear my heart out and put it into the

spare room before I will think about this any longer. The only trouble is they might find it a little hard."

"It could be used for hairpins," said her friend, absently. "I should flute it, too, and put a mock Valenciennes cover on." . . .

"Buy your furniture at a factory in the white," telegraphed Tom, one day, from California, in the perfectly disconnected but useful manner characteristic of Tom when he gave advice. He had not written to Corona since he went away. A serial story could not have so convinced her that his busy heart remembered her. And in the moment, the worry and wear of her somewhat solitary plans dissolved like the fogs within the sunrise on her own golden harbor shore. She had almost cried, the day before, when she went out alone (her first walk since her accident), to buy her own silver. It had seemed to her a very pathetic thing to do. Now it seemed rather amusing than otherwise. How Tom would laugh! And Tom remembered her; always had. She put the foolish, extravagant telegram to her lips. She said "Dear Tom," sitting alone. Her heart lifted. She was sure she should be happy in her house.

Besides, the silver was plated. It was n't worth a sentiment, however cheap.

"Let me catch you at it again!" said Corona, apostrophizing her wet lashes in the glass. "I 'll feed you off of pewter, if I do!"

Corona was interrupted by the stage rumbling by with the afternoon mail. She dried her eyes and went over to the office, where she found two letters. One was from Susy, and ran:—

DEAR CO,—I hope you 're coming home soon. Baby has the mumps. There are a great many express packages for you that keep coming. It will remind you how many friends you have. I have taken the liberty—I knew you would n't care—I opened them all. Sixteen of them are pin-cushions and fourteen are tidies. One is a patent nutmeg-grater.

Yours, aff., SUE.

P.S.—The tidies are all green and fifteen of the cushions are red.

The other letter was from the builder, and read as follows:—

FAIRHARBOR,

DEAR MADAM,—I should like to have you send your furniture on at once. We find it

won't go up the stairs. We must build it into the house.

The weather has been very poor and it has rained almost ever since we began to work.

Yours, with respect,

G. W. TIMBERS.

—*An Old Maid's Paradise.*

## GEORGE WASHINGTON CABLE.[1]

(BORN, 1844.)

### DIXIE.*

IN her sleep Mary dreamed over again the late rencontre. Again she heard the challenging outcry, and again was lashing her horse to his utmost speed; but this time her enemy seemed too fleet for her. He overtook —he laid his hand upon her. A scream was just at her lips, when she awoke with a wild start, to find the tall woman standing over her, and bidding her in a whisper rise with all stealth and dress with all speed.

"Where 's Alice?" asked Mary. "Where 's my little girl?"

"She 's there. Never mind her yit, till you 're dressed. Here; not them cloze; these here homespun things. Make haste, but don't get excited."

* The fifty-fifth chapter of 'Dr. Sevier."

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. **xxi.**

"How long have I slept?" asked Mary, hurriedly obeying.

"You could n't 'a' more 'n got to sleep. Sam ought n't to have shot back at 'em. They 're after 'im, hot; four of 'em jess now passed through on the road, right here past my front gate."

"What kept them back so long?" asked Mary, tremblingly attempting to button her dress in the back.

"Let me do that," said the woman. "They could n't come very fast; had to kind o' beat the bushes every hundred yards or so. If they 'd of been more of 'em they 'd a-come faster, 'cause they 'd a-left one or two behind at each turn-out, and come along with the rest. There; now that there hat, on the table." As Mary took the hat the speaker stepped to a window and peeped into the early day. A suppressed exclamation escaped her. "O you poor boy!" she murmured. Mary sprang toward her, but the stronger woman hurried her away from the spot.

"Come; take up the little one 'thout wakin' her. Three more of 'em 's a-passin'. The little young feller in the middle reelin' and swayin' in his saddle, and t' others givin' him water from his canteen."

"Wounded?" asked Mary, with a terrified look, bringing the sleeping child.

"Yes, the last wound he 'll ever git, I reckon. Jess take the baby, so. Sam 's already took her cloze. He 's waitin' out in the woods here behind the house. He 's got the critters down in the hollow. Now, here! This here bundle 's a ridin'-skirt. It 's not mournin', but you must n't mind. It 's mighty green and cottony-lookin', but—anyhow, you jess put it on when you git into the woods. Now it 's good sun-up outside. The way you must do—you jess keep on the lef' side o' me, close, so as when I jess santer out e-easy todes the back gate you 'll be hid from all the other houses. Then when we git to the back gate I 'll kind 'o stand like I was lookin' into the pig-pen, and you jess slide away on a line with me into the woods, and there 'll be Sam. No, no; take your hat off and sort o' hide it. Now; you ready?"

Mary threw her arms around the woman's neck and kissed her passionately.

"Oh, don't stop for that!" said the woman, smiling with an awkward diffidence. "Come!"

"What is the day of the month?" asked Mary of the spy.

They had been riding briskly along a mere cattle-path in the woods for half an hour, and had just struck into an old, unused road that promised to lead them presently into and through some fields of cotton. Alice, slumbering heavily, had been, little by little, dressed, and was now in the man's arms. As Mary spoke they slackened pace to a quiet trot, and crossed a broad highway nearly at right angles.

"That would 'a' been our road with the buggy," said the man, "if we could of took things easy." They were riding almost straight away from the sun. His dress had been changed again, and in a suit of new, dark brown homespun wool, over a pink calico shirt and white cuffs and collar, he presented the best possible picture of spruce gentility that the times would justify. "'What day of the month,' did you ask? *I* 'll never tell you, but I know it 's Friday."

"Then it 's the eighteenth," said Mary.

They met an old negro driving three yoke of oxen attached to a single empty cart.

"Uncle," said the spy, "I don't reckon the boss will mind our sort o' ridin' straight thoo his grove, will he?"

"Not 't all, boss; on'y dess be so kyine an' shet the gates behine you, sah."

They passed those gates and many another, shutting them faithfully, and journeying on through miles of fragrant lane and fields of young cotton and corn, and stretches of wood where the squirrel scampered before them, and reaches of fallow ground still wet with dew, and patches of sedge, and old fields grown up with thickets of young trees; now pushing their horses to a rapid gallop, where they were confident of escaping notice, and now ambling leisurely, where the eyes of men afield, or of women at home, followed them with rustic scrutiny; or some straggling Confederate soldier on foot or in saddle met them in the way.

"How far must we go before we can stop?" asked Mary.

"Jess as far 's the critters 'll take us without showin' distress."

"South is out that way, is n't it?" she asked again, pointing off to the left.

"Look here," said the spy, with a look that was humorous, but not only humorous.

"What?"

"Two or three times last night, and now ag'in, you gimme a sort o' sneakin' notion you don't trust me," said he.

"Oh!" exclaimed she, "I do! Only I 'm so anxious to be going south."

"Jess so," said the man. "Well, we 're goin' sort o' due west right now. You see we dassent take this railroad anywheres about here," —they were even then crossing the track of the Mobile and Ohio Railway—"because that 's jess where they *sho* to be on the look-out fur us. And I can't take you straight south on the dirt roads, because I don't know the country down that way. But this way I know it like your hand knows the way to your mouth, as the felleh says. Learned it most all sence the war broke out, too. And so the whole thing is we got to jess keep straight across the country here till we strike the Mississippi Central."

"What time will that be?"

"Time! You don't mean time o' day, do you?" he asked.

"Yes," said Mary, smiling.

"Why, we 'll be lucky to make it in two whole days. Won't we, Alice!" The child had waked, and was staring into her mother's face. Mary caressed her. The spy looked at them silently. The mother looked up, as if to speak, but was silent.

"Hello!" said the man, softly; for a tear

shone through her smile. Whereat she laughed. "I ought to be ashamed to be so unreasonable," she said.

"Well, now, I 'd like to contradict you for once," responds the spy; "but the fact is, how kin I, when Noo Orleens is jest about southwest frum here, anyhow?"

"Yes," said Mary, pleasantly, "it 's between south and south-west."

The spy made a gesture of mock amazement.

"Well, you air particklly what you say. I never hear o' but one party that was more particklly than you. I reckon you never hear' tell o' him, did you?"

"Who was he?" asked Mary.

"Well, I never got his name, nor his habitation, as the felleh says; but he was so conscientious that when a highwayman attackted him onct, he would n't holla murder nor he would n't holla thief, 'cause he was n't certain whether the highwayman wanted to kill him or rob him. He was something like George Washington, who could n't tell a lie. Did you ever hear that story about George Washington?"

"About his chopping the cherry-tree with his hatchet?" asked Mary.

"Oh, I see you done heard the story!" said

the spy, and left it untold ; but whether he was making game of his auditor or not she did not know, and never found out. But on they went, by many a home ; through miles of growing crops, and now through miles of lofty pine forests, and by log-cabins and unpainted cottages, from within whose open doors came often the loud feline growl of the spinning-wheel. So on and on, Mary spending the first night in a lone forest cabin of pine poles, whose master, a Confederate deserter, fed his ague-shaken wife and cotton-headed children oftener with the spoils of his rifle than with the products of the field. The spy and the deserter lay down together, and together rose again with the dawn, in a deep thicket, a few hundred yards away.

The travellers had almost reached the end of this toilsome horseback journey, when rains set in, and, for forty-eight hours more, swollen floods and broken bridges held them back, though within hearing of the locomotive's whistle.

But at length, one morning, Mary stepped aboard the train that had not long before started south from the town of Holly Springs, Mississippi, assisted with decorous alacrity by the conductor, and followed by the station-agent with Alice in his arms, and by the telegraph-

operator with a home-made satchel or two of luggage and luncheon. It was disgusting,—to two thin, tough-necked women, who climbed aboard unassisted, at the other end of the same coach.

"You kin just bet she 's a widder, and them fellers knows it," said one to the other, taking a seat and spitting expertly through the window.

"If she ain't," responded the other, putting a peeled snuff-stick into her cheek, "then her husband 's got the brass buttons, and they knows that. Look at 'er a-smi-i-ilin'!"

"What you reckon makes her look so wore out?" asked the first. And the other replied promptly, with unbounded loathing, "Dayncin'," and sent her emphasis out of the window in liquid form without disturbing her intervening companion.

During the delay caused by the rain Mary had found time to refit her borrowed costume. Her dress was a stout, close-fitting homespun of mixed cotton and wool, woven in a neat plaid of walnut-brown, oak-red, and the pale olive dye of the hickory. Her hat was a simple round thing of woven pine straw, with a slightly drooping brim, its native brown glass undisturbed, and the low crown wrapped about with a wreath of wild grasses plaited together with a

bit of yellow cord. Alice wore a much-washed pink calico frock and a hood of the same stuff.

"Some officer's wife," said two very sweet and lady-like persons, of unequal age and equal good taste in dress, as their eyes took an inventory of her apparel. They wore bonnets that were quite handsome, and had real false flowers and silk ribbons on them.

"Yes, she 's been to camp somewhere to see him."

"Beautiful child she 's got," said one, as Alice began softly to smite her mother's shoulder for private attention, and to whisper gravely as Mary bent down.

Two or three soldiers took their feet off the seats, and one of them, at the amiably murmured request of the conductor, put his shoes on.

"The car in front is your car," said the conductor to another man, in especially dirty gray uniform.

"You kin hev it," said the soldier, throwing his palm open with an air of happy extravagance, and a group of gray-headed "citizens," just behind, exploded a loud country laugh.

"D' I onderstaynd you to lafe at me, saw?" drawled the soldier, turning back with a pretence of heavy gloom on his uncombed brow.

"Laughin' at yo' friend yondeh," said one of the citizens, grinning and waving his hand after the departing conductor.

"'Caze if you lafe at me again, saw,"—the frown deepened,—"I 'll thess go 'ight straight out iss caw." *

The laugh that followed this dreadful threat was loud and general, the victims laughing loudest of all, and the soldier smiling about benignly, and slowly scratching his elbows. Even the two ladies smiled. Alice's face remained impassive. She looked twice into her mother's to see if there was no smile there. But the mother smiled at her, took off her hood and smoothed back the fine gold, then put the hood on again, and tied its strings under the upstretched chin.

Presently Alice pulled softly at the hollow of her mother's elbow.

"Mamma—mamma!" she whispered. Mary bowed her ear. The child gazed solemnly across the car at another stranger, then pulled the mother's arm again, "That man over there —winked at me."

And thereupon another man, sitting sidewise on the seat in front, and looking back at Alice,

* Out of this car.

tittered softly, and said to Mary, with a raw drawl :—

"She 's a-beginnin' young."

"She means some one on the other side," said Mary, quite pleasantly, and the man had sense enough to hush.

The jest and the laugh ran to and fro everywhere. It seemed very strange to Mary to find it so. There were two or three convalescent wounded men in the car, going home on leave, and they appeared never to weary of the threadbare joke of calling their wounds "furloughs." There was one little slip of a fellow—he could hardly have been seventeen—wounded in the hand, whom they kept teazed to the point of exasperation by urging him to confess that he had shot himself for a furlough, and of whom they said, later, when he had got off at a flag-station, that he was the bravest soldier in his company. No one on the train seemed to feel that he had got all that was coming to him until the conductor had exchanged a jest with him. The land laughed. On the right hand and on the left it dimpled and wrinkled in gentle depressions and ridges, and rolled away in fields of young corn and cotton. The train skipped and clattered along at a happy-go-lucky, twelve-

miles-an-hour gait, over trestles and stock-pits, through flowery cuts and along slender, rain-washed embankments where dewberries were ripening, and whence cattle ran down and galloped off across the meadows on this side and that, tails up and heads down, throwing their horns about, making light of the screaming destruction, in their dumb way, as the people made light of the war. At stations where the train stopped—and it stopped on the faintest excuse—a long line of heads and gray shoulders were thrust out of the windows of the soldiers' car, in front, with all manner of masculine head-coverings, even bloody handkerchiefs; and woe to the negro or negress or "citizen" who, by any conspicuous demerit or excellence of dress, form, stature, speech, or bearing, drew the fire of that line! No human power of face or tongue could stand the incessant volley of stale quips and mouldy jokes, affirmative, interrogative, and exclamatory, that fell about their victim.

At one spot, in a lovely natural grove, where the air was spiced with the gentle pungency of the young hickory foliage, the train paused a moment to let off a man in fine gray cloth, whose yellow stripes and one golden star on the

coat-collar indicated a major of cavalry. It seemed as though pandemonium had opened. Mules braying, negroes yodling, axes ringing, teamsters singing, men shouting and howling, and all at nothing; mess-fires smoking all about in the same hap-hazard, but roomy, disorder in which the trees of the grove had grown; the railroad side lined with a motley crowd of jolly fellows in spurs, and the atmosphere between them and the line of heads in the car-windows murky with the interchange of compliments that flew back and forth from the "web-foots" * to the "critter company," and from the "critter company" to the "web-foots." As the train moved off, "I say, boys," drawled a lank, coatless giant on the roadside, with but one suspender and one spur, "tha-at 's right! Gen'l Beerygyard told you to strike fo' yo' homes, an' I see you a-doin' it ez fass as you kin git thah." And the "citizens" in the rear car-windows giggled even at that; while the "web-foots" he-hawed their derision, and the train went on, as one might say, with its hands in its pockets, whooping and whistling over the fields—after the cows; for the day was declining.

Mary was awed. As she had been forewarned

* Infantry.

to do, she tried not to seem unaccustomed to, or out of harmony with, all this exuberance. But there was some thing so brave in it, coming from a people who were playing a losing game, with their lives and fortunes for their stakes; some thing so gallant in it, laughing and gibing in the sight of blood, and smell of fire, and shortness of food and raiment, that she feared she had betrayed a stranger's wonder and admiration every time the train stopped, and the idlers of the station platform lingered about her window and silently paid their ungraceful but complimentary tribute of simulated casual glances.

For, with all this jest, it was very plain there was but little joy. It was not gladness; it was bravery. It was the humor of an invincible spirit—the gayety of defiance. She could easily see the grim earnestness beneath the jocund temper, and beneath the unrepining smile the privation and the apprehension. What joy there was, was a martial joy. The people were confident of victory at last,—a victorious end, whatever might lie between; and of even what lay between they would confess no fear. Richmond was safe, Memphis safer, New Orleans safest. Yea, notwithstanding Porter and Farra-

gut were pelting away at Forts Jackson and St. Philip. Indeed, if the rumor be true, if Farragut's ships had passed those forts, leaving Porter behind, then the Yankee sea-serpent was cut in two, and there was an end of him in that direction. Ha! ha!

"Is to-day the twenty-sixth?" asked Mary, at last, of one of the ladies in real ribbons, leaning over toward her.

"Yes, ma'am."

"It was the younger one who replied. As she did so she came over and sat by Mary.

"I judge, from what I heard your little girl asking you, that you are going beyond Jackson."

"I 'am going to New Orleans."

"Do you live there?" The lady's interest seemed genuine and kind.

"Yes. I am going to join my husband there."

Mary saw by the reflection in the lady's face that a sudden gladness must have overspread her own.

"He 'll be mighty glad, I 'm sure," said the pleasant stranger, patting Alice's cheek, and looking, with a pretty fellow-feeling, first into the child's face and then into Mary's.

"Yes, he will," said Mary, looking down upon the curling locks at her elbow with a mother's happiness.

"Is he in the army?" asked the lady.

Mary's face fell.

"His health is bad," she replied.

"I know some nice people down in New Orleans," said the lady again.

"We have n't many acquaintances," rejoined Mary, with a timidity that was almost trepidation. Her eyes dropped, and she began softly to smooth Alice's collar and hair.

"I did n't know," said the lady, "but you might know some of them. For instance, there 's Dr. Sevier."

Mary gave a start and smiled.

"Why, is he your friend too?" she asked. She looked up into the lady's quiet, brown eyes and down again into her own lap, where her hands had suddenly knit together, and then again into the lady's face. "We have no friend like Dr. Sevier."

"Mother," called the lady softly, and beckoned. The senior lady leaned toward her. "Mother, this lady is from New Orleans and is an intimate friend of Dr. Sevier."

The mother was pleased.

"What might one call your name?" she asked, taking a seat behind Mary and continuing to show her pleasure.

"Richling."

The mother and daughter looked at each other. They had never heard the name before.

Yet only a little while later the mother was saying to Mary,—they were expecting at any moment to hear the whistle for the terminus of the route, the central Mississippi town of Canton:—

"My dear child, no! I could n't sleep to-night if I thought you was all alone in one o' them old hotels in Canton. No, you must come home with us. We 're barely two mile' from town, and we 'll have the carriage ready for you bright and early in the morning, and our coachman will put you on the cars just as nice—Trouble?" She laughed at the idea. "No; I tell you what would trouble me,—that is, if we 'd allow it; that 'd be for you to stop in one o' them hotels all alone, child, and like' as not some careless servant not wake you in time for the cars to-morrow." At this word she saw capitulation in Mary's eyes. "Come, now, my child, we 're not going to take no for an answer."

Nor did they.

But what was the result? The next morning, when Mary and Alice stood ready for the carriage, and it was high time they were gone, the carriage was not ready; the horses had got astray in the night. And while the black coachman was on one horse, which he had found and caught, and was scouring the neighboring fields and lanes and meadows in search of the other, there came out from townward upon the still, country air the long whistle of the departing train; and then the distant rattle and roar of its far southern journey began, and then its warning notes to the scattering colts and cattle.

"Look away!"—it seemed to sing—"Look away!"—the notes fading, failing, on the ear,—"away—away—away down south in Dixie,"—the last train that left for New Orleans until the war was over.—*Dr. Sevier.*

## THOMAS FREDERICK CRANE.[1]

(BORN, 1844.)

### AUNT MARIA AND THE AUTOPHONE.

SOME time since I had occasion to see a friend off on a train which crawled from the shabby little station on the hill west of the town. By some mistake we arrived there a half-hour too early, and found the waiting-room occupied by a single person—an elderly farmer evidently—who was dozing on a box drawn close to the whitewashed stove.

My friend—albeit only a commercial traveller for the Chicago firm of Butcher, Packer, and Co., dealers in pressed meats, hams, etc.—prided himself greatly on his love for music and poetry; but as his models were Wagner and Browning, our discussions were always stormy and fruitless. He had finally given up all efforts to make me sympathize with him in regard to the latter, but still hoped to convert me to his own views in respect to the former.

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xxii.

So as we too drew near the stove—for it was a raw December day—my friend was just concluding an enthusiastic reference to "the music of the future." His eloquence had once or twice the effect of making the other occupant of the room move uneasily on his box, but he did not open his eyes until my friend declared, in a most impressive manner: "The Americans, sir, are naturally a musical people, but the kind of music which shall kindle their hearts to a divine rapture has not yet been discovered. When it is, they will rise responsive to it like one man."

"You 're right there, stranger," said the elderly party, stretching himself. "That 's just what I used to say to the old woman. I said, 'Ma, don't worry about Aunt Maria'—Aunt Maria 's the old woman's sister, you see; she lives with us, and takes care of the children, 'specially John Henry—'don't worry about Maria. It ain't that there is n't any music in her soul, but you ha'n't found the right instrument yet.' Ma smiled kind of melancholy like, and allowed that she did n't believe there was any music on arth that 'd please her sister. 'Then just wait,' says I, 'for some other place;' but ma mumbled out some thing about she 'd

like to see the effect of a harp upon Maria. I wanted to cheer her up a little (the old woman looks a leetle too much on the dark side); so says I, 'Well, ma, if the harp don't work, perhaps they 'll try her with a sackbut, or a timbrel, or some of them 'ere Old Testament instruments, and like as not they 'll fetch her with one of them.'

"You see, stranger, we 're the musicalest family in the whole county. When I married ma, she says, 'Abner' (that 's me)—'Abner,' says she, 'I kin do without a rag carpet in the kitchin, but I can n't live without a melodjun in the parlor.'

"So we had a melodjun in the parlor, and the children came naturally by their love for music. Why, bless your soul! I may say they took to it with their first breaths, and kept it up always after. The girls had the melodjun, and the boys had every thing from a willow whistle to a fiddle, and when Martha and Stella was draggin' a duet out of the melodjun in the parlor, and Jehiel and Jonathan scrapin' out the 'Arkansaw Traveller' in the kitchin on a fiddle and banjo, it was a musical abode.

"Every thing went along all right until Aunt Maria came. Lordy! how that woman did

hate music! Nobody had any peace in the house, and what 's the worst, a sort of bad luck came over the harmless instruments themselves. Jonathan's fiddle strings was always getting broke before he 'd half tuned up, and the pesky melodjun took to leaking so that both gals together, one on the pedals and the other on the keys, could hardly pump 'Old Hundred' out of her Sundays. Some did suspect Maria, but," said the old man, looking cautiously around, "I don't think she was altogether to blame; howsomever," with a significant wink, "she got the credit of it."

"When John Henry—he 's the youngest—came, Maria's heart seemed to kind of soften. His first drum lasted a week, and I noticed she never had any thing to say agin *his* vocal accomplishments. Well, when John Henry was four years old, the old woman began to look around and see what instrument he 'd be likely to take to. Aunt Maria said it was a burning shame to make that innocent child a stumblin'-block in the way of Christians, but I said I guessed John Henry could stand it—if we could.

"The next day ma went down to the village to sell her butter and eggs, and when she came

home at night she had a small bundle, which she put away in the parlor until after supper. I know'd what it was—leastways, not exactly, but I guessed by the way the old woman slung the dishes on the table that night that we should hear some news soon. When the dishes was washed up, 'Ma,' says I, 'did n't I see you bring in a bundle jest now?' 'You did, Abner,' says she, and she smiled from one ear to the other. 'Abner,' says she, 'I 've found an instrument at last for John Henry.' Aunt Maria fetched a kind of cross between a sigh and a groan, but nobody paid any attention to her. 'Well, ma,' says I, 'let 's have it.' So out she brought the bundle, and there was a sort of an accordjun on two legs, and a lot of bits of white paper as full of holes as the old woman's colander. We all got around the table while ma showed us how it worked. 'You see,' says she, 'you jest poke in the paper—here, John Henry, this is your'n, and you shall have the first try; there—you shove the paper in there, and work your hand so, and it plays all the music on the paper.' 'Ma,' says I, 'do you mean to say, as a member in good and regular standin', that that 'ere instrument plays them holes?' But John Henry had grabbed the instrument, and

jest as sure as I set here, stranger, that four-year-old child squeezed out 'Old Hundred' jest as solemn and a derned sight faster than ma's melodjun. But you oughter to see Aunt Maria; she straightened up and glared at that innocent child as if she wished he had lived in Palestine about the year one, and bolted out of the room without a word.

"Well, stranger, it was a sight to see John Henry on the kitchen floor with that 'ere thing between his little knees, and playing the 'Sweet By-and-By' in a way to make tears come to everybody's eyes, exceptin' always Aunt Maria's. For a month our house was the most popularest house at the Corners, and John Henry gave a free concert every night for an hour before he went to bed. The strangest thing," said the old man, in a mysterious tone, "was that that 'ere instrument kept in playin' order all the time, whether it was because John Henry took it to bed with him every night, or whether it was from the superior build of the consarn, I can't say. Perhaps"—with a wink—"Aunt Maria did n't understand its innerd construction as well as she did a fiddle or a melodjun.

"Well, as I say, the instrument kept in playin' order all winter; the music, 'specially

the pop'lar tunes, was a little the worse for wear, but that's all. 'I want to be an angel' and one or two others got tored in two about the middle of March, and John Henry asked Aunt Maria to mend them one day, and, bless you! she loved that darlin' child too much to refuse him any thing, so she pasted the tunes together as well as she could, and next day John Henry took his instrument to Sunday-school. You see, he 'd taken it a number of times, and the teacher thought it kind of 'livened up the exercises. But this day, jest as John Henry was slowly and surely grindin' out 'I want to be an angel,' and had got to the middle of the tune (where it was tored, you see), when all at onst out he came with 'Whoa, Emma!' and the innocent child was too much surprised to stop until the teacher suspended the musical exercises for that day. John Henry did n't git no prize that year, but I hold that Aunt Maria was morally responsible. You see, she had so little music in her—leastwise we thought so then—that she couldn't even be trusted to paste two tunes together.

"Howsomever, as spring came on, we thought we kind of noticed a change in Maria. It was n't that she was gittin' musical—that was,

perhaps, too much to expect on this arth, as I said to ma—but she was growin' mellow somehow. I think it was all owin' to John Henry's tender influence. You ask how I knew she was gittin' mellow, stranger? Well, you see, John Henry's instrument still kept in workin' order. She and John Henry would disappear by the hour, and what they did no one knew. Ma said one day she thought she had heard John Henry playin' on his instrument in Maria's room, leastwise she had heard a noise there, but it did n't sound like any instrument in that house. 'Perhaps,' said I, 'it was Maria singin'.' But the more I thought it over, the more mysterious the thing seemed, and I made up my mind I 'd git to the bottom of it. So one day, when ma and the girls had gone to town, and the boys was hocin' potatoes, I jest slipped into the house and listened awhile. By-and-by I thought I heard a sound in the direction of Maria's room, and so I took off my boots and crawled softly up the stairs; but, lordy! I might jest as well have kept them on, for when I got up near the door I heard the most dreadful noises you ever dreamed of. If I had had any hair, it would have stood up and run off my head. I first thought that Maria was tor-

turin' that innocent child, and was goin' to bust in the door, but I thought I 'd first take a peep through the keyhole. What do you think I saw, stranger? John Henry was in his favorite attitude in the middle of the floor, workin' the instrument with one hand and feedin' the music in with the other, and Aunt Maria sat in her rockin'-chair, rockin' slowly to and fro, and keepin' time with her hands. Her glasses was pushed up on her forrard, and tears of joy was runnin' down her cheeks, and John Henry kept playin' faster and faster; but what music! No tune that I had ever hearn—and we had all sorts in that house at one time or anuther—came from that instrument. I thought some thing was wrong, and in I rushed. Aunt Maria cried, 'Oh!' and fell back in her chair, lookin' dreadful sheepish; but John Henry! Stranger, what do you think that lamb did? Why, he jest winked at his pa, and when I asked him what that infernal row meant, he said, kind of under his breath, 'Why, you see, pa, one day I got one of them tunes in hindside foremost, and Aunt Maria was so pleased that I 've gone on that way ever since, hindside foremost or upside down.'

"I said to ma that night when she got home: 'You see, ma, you was wrong about Maria; she 's got as much music in her as the rest of the family, but she 's obliged to take hers in a peculiar way. She can't take it straight, but jest give it to her hindside foremost or upside down, and she enjoys it as much as any one.'"

Just then a whistle blew, and my friend's train came along. He got into the car with a dazed expression on his face, as if an idea was trying to crystallize into words. As the train was moving away he came rushing out on the rear platform, and putting up his hands in the form of a speaking-trumpet, he shouted, "Try your Browning hindside foremost," and as the train swept around a curve I heard faintly on the clear cold air, "or upside down."—*Harper's Magazine*, July, 1883.

## ROBERT JONES BURDETTE.[1]

(BORN, 1844.)

### RHEUMATISM MOVEMENT CURE.

ONE day, not a great while ago, Mr. Middlerib read in his favorite paper a paragraph stating that the sting of a bee was a sure cure for rheumatism, and citing several remarkable instances in which people had been perfectly cured by this abrupt remedy. Mr. Middlerib thought of the rheumatic twinges that grappled his knees once in a while, and made his life a burden to him.

He read the article several times, and pondered over it. He understood that the stinging must be done scientifically and thoroughly. The bee, as he understood the article, was to be griped by the ears and set down upon the rheumatic joint, and held there until it stung itself stingless. He had some misgivings about the matter. He knew it would hurt. He hardly thought it could hurt any worse than the rheumatism, and it had been so many years since

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xx.

he was stung by a bee that he had almost forgotten what it felt like. He had, however, a general feeling that it would hurt some. But desperate diseases require desperate remedies, and Mr. Middlerib was willing to undergo any amount of suffering if it would cure his rheumatism.

He contracted with Master Middlerib for a limited supply of bees; humming and buzzing about in the summer air, Mr. Middlerib did not know how to get them. He felt, however, that he could safely depend upon the instincts and methods of boyhood. He knew that if there was any way in heaven whereby the shyest bee that ever lifted a two hundred pound man off the clover could be induced to enter a wide-mouthed glass bottle, his son knew that way.

For the small sum of one dime Master Middlerib agreed to procure several, to wit: six bees, sex and age not specified; but, as Mr. Middlerib was left in uncertainty as to the race, it was made obligatory upon the contractor to have three of them honey and three humble, or, in the generally accepted vernacular, bumble-bees. Mr. M. did not tell his son what he wanted those bees for, and the boy went off on his mission with his head so full of

astonishment that it fairly whirled. Evening brings all home, and the last rays of the declining sun fell upon Master Middlerib with a short, wide-mouthed bottle comfortably populated with hot, ill-natured bees, and Mr. Middlerib and a dime. The dime and the bottle changed hands. Mr. Middlerib put the bottle in his coat pocket and went into the house, eyeing everybody he met very suspiciously, as though he had made up his mind to sting to death the first person who said "bee" to him. He confided his guilty secret to none of his family. He hid his bees in his bedroom, and as he looked at them just before putting them away, he half wished the experiment was safely over. He wished the imprisoned bees did not look so hot and cross. With exquisite care he submerged the bottle in a basin of water and let a few drops in on the heated inmates to cool them off.

At the tea-table he had a great fright. Miss Middlerib, in the artless simplicity of her romantic nature, said:

"I smell bees. How the odor brings up——"

But her father glared at her and said, with superfluous harshness and execrable grammar:

"Hush up! You don't smell nothing."

Whereupon Mrs. Middlerib asked him if he had eaten any thing that disagreed with him, and Miss Middlerib said:

"Why, pa!" and Master Middlerib smiled as he wondered.

Bedtime at last, and the night was warm and sultry. Under various false pretences, Mr. Middlerib strolled about the house until everybody else was in bed, and then he sought his room. He turned the lamp down until its feeble ray shone dimly as a death-light.

Mr. Middlerib disrobed slowly—very slowly. When at last he was ready to go lumbering into his peaceful couch, he heaved a profound sigh, so full of apprehension and grief that Mrs. Middlerib, who was awakened by it, said if it gave him so much pain to come to bed, perhaps he had better sit up all night. Mr. Middlerib choked another sigh, but said nothing and crept into bed. After lying still a few moments he reached out and got his bottle of bees.

It was not an easy thing to do to pick one bee out of the botttleful with his fingers, and not get into trouble. The first bee Mr. Middlerib got was a little brown honey-bee, that would n't weigh half an once if you picked him up by the ears, but if you lifted him by the hind leg

would weigh as much as the last end of a bay mule. Mr. Middlerib could not repress a groan.

"What 's the matter with you?" sleepily asked his wife.

It was very hard for Mr. Middlerib to say he only felt hot, but he did it. He did n't have to lie about it either. He did feel very hot indeed. About eighty-six all over, and one hundred and ninety-seven on the end of his thumb. He reversed the bee, and pressed the warlike terminus of it firmly against the rheumatic knee.

It did n't hurt so badly as he thought it would.

It did n't hurt at all.

Then Mr. Middlerib remembered that when the honey-bee stabs a human foe, it generally leaves its harpoon in the wound, and the invalid knew that the only thing this bee had to sting with was doing its work at the end of his thumb.

He reached his arm out from under the sheets, and dropped this disabled atom of rheumatism liniment on the carpet. Then, after a second of blank wonder, he began to feel round for the bottle, and wished he knew what he did with it.

In the meantime strange things had been

going on. When he caught hold of the first bee, Mr. Middlerib, for reasons, drew it out in such haste that for the time he forgot all about the bottle and its remedial contents, and left it lying uncorked in the bed, between himself and his innocent wife. In the darkness there had been a quiet but general emigration from that bottle. The bees, their wings clogged with the water Mr. Middlerib had poured upon them to cool and tranquillize them, were crawling aimlessly about over the sheet. While Mr. Middlerib was feeling around for it, his ears were suddenly thrilled and his heart frozen by a wild, piercing scream from his wife.

"Murder!" she screamed, "murder! Oh! help me! Help! help!"

Mr. Middlerib sat bolt upright in bed. His hair stood on end. The night was warm, but he turned to ice in a minute.

"Where in thunder," he said, with pallid lips, as he felt all over the bed in frenzied haste —"where in thunder are them infernal bees?"

And a large "bumble," with a sting as pitiless as the finger of scorn, just then climbed up the inside of Mr. Middlerib's night-shirt, until it got squarely between his shoulders, and then it felt for his marrow, and he said, calmly:

"Here is one of them."

And Mrs. Middlerib felt ashamed of her feeble screams when Mr. Middlerib threw up both arms, and, with a howl that made the windows rattle, roared:

"Take him off! Oh, land of Scott, somebody take him off!"

And, when a little honey-bee began tickling the sole of Mrs. Middlerib's foot, she so shrieked that the house was bewitched, and immediately went into spasms.

The household was aroused by this time. Miss Middlerib and Master Middlerib and the servants were pouring into the room, adding to the general confusion by howling at random and asking irrelevant questions, while they gazed at the figure of a man a little on in years, arrayed in a long night-shirt, pawing fiercely at the unattainable spot in the middle of his back, while he danced an unnatural, weird, wicked-looking jig by the dim, religious light of the night-lamp. And while he danced and howled, and while they gazed and shouted, a navy-blue wasp, that Master Middlerib had put in the bottle for good measure and variety, and to keep the menagerie stirred up, had dried his legs and wings with a corner of the sheet, and.

after a preliminary circle or two around the bed to get up his motion and settle down to a working gait, he fired himself across the room, and to his dying day Mr. Middlerib will always believe that one of the servants mistook him for a burglar and shot him.

No one, not even Mr. Middlerib himself, could doubt that he was at least for the time, most thoroughly cured of rheumatism. His own boy could not have carried himself more lightly or with greater agility. But the cure was not permanent, and Mr. Middlerib does not like to talk about it.

—*New York Weekly.*

## GEORGE T. LANIGAN.

(BORN, 1845—DIED, 1886.)

### THE AMATEUR ORLANDO.

IT was an Amateur Dram. Ass.,
(Kind reader, although your
Knowledge of French is not first-class,
Don't call that Amature.)
It was an Amateur Dram. Ass.,
The which did warfare wage
On the dramatic works of this
And every other age.

It had a walking gentleman,
A leading juvenile,
First lady in book-muslin dressed,
With a galvanic smile;
Thereto a singing chambermaid,
Benignant heavy pa,
And oh, heavier still was the heavy vill-
Ain, with his fierce "Ha! Ha!"

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xxviii.

There was n't an author from Shakespeare
down—
Or up—to Boucicault,
These amateurs were n't competent
(S. Wegg) to collar and throw.
And when the winter time came round—
"Season" 's a stagier phrase—
The Am. Dram. Ass. assaulted one
Of the Bard of Avon's plays.

'T was "As You Like It" that they chose;
For the leading lady's heart
Was set on playing *Rosalind*,
Or some other page's part.
And the President of the Am. Dram. Ass.,
A stalwart dry-goods clerk,
Was cast for *Orlando*, in which *rôle*
He felt he 'd make his mark.

"I mind me," said the President,
(All thoughtful was his face,)
"When *Orlando* was taken by Thingummy
That *Charles* was played by Mace.
*Charles* hath not many lines to speak,
Nay, not a single length—
Oh, if find we can a Mussulman
(That is, a man of strength),

And bring him on the stage as *Charles*—
  But, alas, it can't be did—"
"It can," replied the Treasurer;
  "Let 's get the Hunky Kid."

This Hunky Kid of whom they spoke
  Belonged to the P. R.;
He always had his hair cut short,
  And always had catarrh.
His voice was gruff, his language rough,
  His forehead villainous low,
And 'neath his broken nose a vast
  Expanse of jaw did show.
He was forty-eight about the chest,
  And his fore-arm at the mid-
Dle measured twenty-one and a half—
  Such was the Hunky Kid!

The Am. Dram. Ass., they have engaged
  This pet of the P. R.;
As *Charles the Wrestler* he 's to be
  A bright particular star.
And when they put the programme out,
  Announce him thus they did:
*Orlando* . . . Mr. ROMEO JONES;
  *Charles* . . . Mr. T. H. KID.

The night has come; the house is packed,
From pit to gallery,
As those who through the curtain peep
Quake inwardly to see.
A squeak 's heard in the orchestra,
As the leader draws across
Th' intestines of the agile cat
The tail of the noble hoss.

All is at sea behind the scenes,
Why do they fear and funk?
Alas, alas, The Hunky Kid
Is lamentably drunk!
He 's in that most unlovely stage
Of half intoxication
When men resent the hint they 're tight
As a personal imputation!

"Ring up! Ring up!" *Orlando* cried,
"Or we must cut the scene;
For *Charles the Wrestler* is imbued
With poisonous benzine;
And every moment gets more drunk
Than he before has been."

The wrestling scene has come and *Charles*
Is much disguised in drink;
The stage to him 's an inclined plane,
The foot-lights make him blink.

Still strives he to act well his part
Where all the honor lies,
Though Shakespeare would not in his lines
His language recognize.
Instead of "Come, where is this young——?"
This man of bone and brawn,
He squares himself and bellows: "Time!
Fetch your *Orlandos* on!"

"Now, Hercules be thy speed, young man,"
Fair *Rosalind* said she,
As the two wrestlers in the ring
Grapple right furiously;
But *Charles the Wrestler* had no sense
Of dramatic propriety.

He seized on Mr. Romeo Jones,
In Græco-Roman style;
He got what they call a grape-vine lock
On that leading juvenile;
He flung him into the orchestra,
And the man with the ophicleide,
On whom he fell, he just said—well,
No matter what—and died!

When once the tiger has tasted blood
And found that it is sweet,
He has a habit of killing more
Than he can possibly eat.

And thus it was with The Hunky Kid;
In his homicidal blindness,
He lifted his hand against *Rosalind*
Not in the way of kindness,
He chased poor *Celia* off at L.,
At R. U. E. *Le Beau*,
And he put such a head upon *Duke Fred*,
In fifteen seconds or so,
That never one of the courtly train
Might his haughty master know.

. . . . . .

And that 's precisely what came to pass,
Because the luckless carles
Belonging to the Am. Dram. Ass.
Cast The Hunky Kid for *Charles!*

—*The New York World.*

## A THRENODY.

The Akhoond of Swat is dead.—*London Papers of January 22, 1878.*

What, what, what,
What 's the news from Swat?
Sad news,
Bad news
Cometh by the cable led

Through the Indian Ocean's bed,
Through the Persian Gulf, the Red
Sea and the Med-
Iterranean—he 's dead—
The Akhoond is dead!

For the Akhoond I mourn.
Who would n't?
He strove to disregard the message stern,
But he Akhoond n't.

Dead, dead, dead;
(Sorrow, Swats!)
Swats wha hae wi' Akhoond bled,
Swats wham he hath often led
Onward to a gory bed,
Or to victory,
As the case might be,—
Sorrow, Swats!
Tears shed,
Shed tears like water,
Your great Akhoond is dead!
That 's Swat 's the matter!

Mourn city of Swat,
Your great Akhoond is not,

But laid 'mid worms to rot—
His mortal part alone, his soul was caught
(Because he was a good Akhoond!)
Up to the bosom of Mahound.
Though earthly walls his frame surround
(Forever hallowed be the ground!)
And skeptics mock the lowly mound
And say "He 's now of no Akhoond!"
His soul is in the skies—
The azure skies that bend above his loved metropolis of Swat,
He sees, with larger, other eyes,
Athwart all earthly mysteries—
He knows what 's Swat.

Let Swat bury the great Akhoond
With a noise of mourning and of lamentation!
Let Swat bury the great Akhoond
With the noise of the mourning of the Swattish nation!
Fallen is at length
Its tower of strength,
Its sun is dimmed ere it had nooned,
Dead lies the great Akhoond,
The great Akhoond of Swat
Is not!

—*The New York World, 1878.*

## THE OSTRICH AND THE HEN.

An Ostrich and a Hen chanced to occupy adjacent Apartments, and the former complained loudly that her Rest was disturbed by the Cackling of her humble Neighbor. "Why is it," she finally asked the Hen, "that you make such an intolerable Noise?" The Hen replied, "Because I have laid an Egg." "Oh, no," said the Ostrich, with a superior Smile, "it is because you are a Hen and don't know any better."

*Moral.*—The moral of the foregoing is not very clear, but it contains some reference to the Agitation for Female Suffrage.

## THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE ANT.

A frivolous Grasshopper, having spent the Summer in Mirth and Revelry, went on the Approach of the inclement Winter to the Ant, and implored it of its charity to stake him. "You had better go to your Uncle," replied the prudent Ant; "had you imitated my Forethought and deposited your Funds in a Savings Bank, you would not now be compelled to regard your Duster in the light of an Ulster." Thus saying, the virtuous Ant retired, and read

in the Papers next morning that the Savings Bank where he had deposited his Funds had suspended.

*Moral.—Dum vivimus, vivamus.*

### THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE SIMPLETON.

A Simpleton, having had Occasion to seat himself, sat down on a Pin; whereon he made an Outcry unto Jupiter. A Philosopher, who happened to be holding up a Hitching-Post in the Vicinity, rebuked him, saying: "I can tell you how to avoid hurting yourself by sitting down on Pins, and will, if you will set them up." The Simpleton eagerly accepting the Offer, the Philosopher swallowed four fingers of the Rum which perisheth, and replied, "Never sit down." He subsequently acquired a vast Fortune by advertising for Agents, to whom he guaranteed $77 a Week for light and easy Employment at their Homes.

*Moral.*—The Wise Man saith: "There is a Nigger in the Fence," but the Fool Sendeth on 50 Cents for Sample and is Taken in.

### THE SHARK AND THE PATRIARCH.

During the Deluge, as a Shark was conducting a Thanksgiving service for an abund-

ant Harvest, a prudent Patriarch looked out and addressed him thus: "My Friend, I am much struck with your open Countenance; pray come into the Ark and make one of us. The Probabilities are a falling Barometer and Heavy Rains throughout the Region of the Lower Universe during the next Forty Days." "That is just the sort of Hair-pin I am," replied the Shark, who had cut several rows of Wisdom Teeth; "fetch on your Deluges." About six Weeks subsequently the Patriarch encountered him on the summit of Mount Ararat, in very straitened Circumstances.

*Moral.*—You Can't pretty much most Always Tell how Things are going to Turn Out Sometimes.—*Fables, by G. Washington Æsop.*

## CHARLES GURDON BUCK.

(BORN, 1847.)

### AN IDYL.

I SAW her first on a day in Spring,
By the side of a stream, as I fished along.
And loitered to hear the robins sing,
And guessed at the secret they told in song.

The apple-blossoms, so white and red,
Were mirrored beneath in the streamlet's flow;
And the sky was blue far overhead,
And far in the depths of the brook below.

I lay half hid by a mossy stone
And looked in the water for flower and sky.
I heard a step—I was not alone:
And a vision of loveliness met my eye.

I saw her come to the other side,
The apple-blossoms were not more fair;

She stooped to gaze in the sunlit tide—
  Her eyes met mine in the water there.

She stopped in timid and mute surprise,
  And that look might have lasted till now, I ween;
But modestly dropping her dove-like eyes,
  She turned her away to the meadow green.

I lay in wonder and rapture lost
  At her slender form and her step so free,
At her raven locks by the breezes tossed,
  As she kicked up her heels in the air for glee.

The apple-blossoms are withered now,
  But the sky, and the meadow, and stream are there;
And whenever I wander that way I vow
  That some day I 'll buy me that little black mare.

—*The Manhattan Magazine*, March, 1884.

## MERVORFIELD.

### I.

"Sure there is none more skill'd in ev'ry grace
Of sweet civility and complaisance:
I have not known a goodlier gentleman.
*Mildred.* He is indeed a paragon!"

"Good afternoon, gentlemen," said Mr. Mervorfield. "Pray be seated."

Mr. Mervorfield was a short and rather slender man, about sixty years of age. He kept his eyes, like hot-house plants, under glass, as they were rather weak and unserviceable. Over the bald top of his head he brushed what he called his hair, which started in two little rows, one above each ear, and made, when "done up," a few slender streaks of grey upon the polished surface of his skull, forming, at their point of meeting, a delicate sort of fin, of which he was quite proud. He was in the habit of stroking it at times, and of saying that he really must have his hair cut; but he knew too much to do more than talk about it.

He had inherited a large fortune in his youth, part of which he had expended in building the fine house in which he lived. His family consisted of Mrs. Mervorfield (*née* Praddlevane); a son, Hector Achilles; a daughter, Forella Bella; and his mother-in-law, Mrs. Praddlevane, who was quite old, and very deaf.

Mr. Mervorfield had early become alive to the necessity of having a decided character; but, after careful observation of himself for several years, he had made up his mind that he

had no character whatever. And so he set to work to cultivate some trait, which should distinguish him from other people.

After much deliberation, he decided that he would be a perfect gentleman. Under all circumstances he would be courteous. Accordingly he purchased books, to the study of which he devoted himself with unflagging zeal; passing his days and nights in a conscientious pursuit of the science of gentility. He could recite to you whole pages of "The Gentleman's Monitor," "Courtesy without a Master," "The Ball-room Guide"—and a hundred and fifty other works, the contents of which he had mastered; and now at the age of fifty-nine years and seven months, he was the most courteous person imaginable.

Each of Mr. Mervorfield's children had also a decided trait. These traits were, like their father's,—selected.

Hector Achilles, when his father told him that he *must* have a trait, decided to be distinguished for his courage, and forthwith began to study to be brave. He had not been very successful, however, in developing his trait. In the first place, his talent lay in a diametrically opposite direction; and then, in the beginning

of his studies, the various members of the family had differed widely, and in a most bewildering manner, as to the books best suited to his need. Mr. Mervorfield suggested the lives of Alexander the Great, Hannibal, and Julius Cæsar. But Hector Achilles rejected them, upon the ground that it was useless for him to think of leading armies or of ruling empires; and Mr. Mervorfield was obliged to admit that, probably, his son was right. Mrs. Mervorfield recommended any thing out of the Sunday-School library, and Mrs. Praddlevane, "Sanford and Merton." Hector Achilles, however, refused to consider them at all. Forella Bella held up for his emulation her two heroes, "Granville de Vigne," and "Strathmore"; and to them he strongly inclined. If he had only been a foot or so taller, enormously wealthy, possessed of any accomplishment, or even gifted with the power of fascination, he would have tried to persevere upon that line; but he felt that these paragons were beyond his reach, and he reluctantly abandoned them. Finally he settled down, very contentedly, to dime novels.

This did not altogether please Mr. Mervorfield; but he finally yielded, and even supplied his son with the literature of his choice; care-

fully extracting therefrom numerous examples of critical emergencies, which he formulated into a skilfully graded system of study. He also procured certain stuffed figures of men of dangerous character—a bandit, a burglar, an Indian—besides a mother and child, and a maiden, whom Hector Achilles was to use in his practice of "Combat," and of "Rescue."

A thoughtful observer might have considered the perils, thus provided for the incipient hero, of a kind not often met with, and so, perhaps, hardly calculated to fit him for the exigencies of every-day life: and, indeed, he always found himself at a loss whenever any thing really happened. This, however, he attributed to the malignity of fate in forcing him into positions for which he was unprepared, rather than to any defect in his methods of preparation. Mr. Mervorfield deemed these failures to be wholly the result of his son's lack of diligence and of conscientious application,—for Hector Achilles had not proved worthy of his father's confidence, but had shown himself willing to neglect his daily practice upon the most frivolous pretexts.

Forella Bella was naturally extremely bold, and had, in fact, while she was a little girl, been

known as a Tom-boy; and many a soun thrashing had her brother received at he hands; until, when she grew old enough to se lect her trait, she decided to be timid and ap prehensive; and now, having for a long tim closely studied a maiden aunt (who spent he days in reading romances throughout the wi ter, and in going to picnics throughout th summer), she had learned to be afraid of almos every thing. It was a beautiful sight to see he robust, exuberant figure clinging shrinkingly t Hector Achilles's meagre frame, as they walke together; while her eyes looked down wit timid appeal into his face, which, unfortunately had not yet become an index of what he wa striving to make his character.

Mrs. Praddlevane was intensely suspicious This, however, was a gift, not an acquirement and so she deserved no particular credit fo excelling the others in the thorough and con sistent exercise of her trait. Mr. Mervorfiel had always been thankful that she had bee born with a trait; for he felt that it would hav been a very difficult undertaking to induce th old lady to select and acquire one at her tim of life.

Poor Mrs. Mervorfield had never been abl

to decide upon a trait for herself. If she had only known it, she was really remarkable for vacillation, heedlessness, and forgetfulness. She really did not care much about the matter, anyway, and was apt to surrender her own very slight personality, adopting the characteristics of any person who chanced to be her companion. She might, indeed, be considered a kind of domestic chameleon.

Such was Mr. Mervorfield, such was Mr. Mervorfield's family: so, when two strangers walked up the steps of the piazza where he was sitting, reading "The Art of Refinement in Ten Easy Lessons," what could we expect him to say but—"Good afternoon, gentlemen; pray be seated."

The men were of ordinary size, and not remarkable in their appearance, except that they wore broad-brimmed black felt hats, slouched over their eyes, and red silk handkerchiefs knotted about their throats. Their costume made Mr. Mervorfield feel that they must have weapons concealed upon their persons; their faces convinced him that they had not. He would have liked to inquire their business, but he feared that such a question would be a breach of etiquette, an exhibition of vulgar

curiosity; and so he forebore, contenting himself with the remark, that it was "a very pleasant day."

"Remarkably so—I mean, you 're right, old boy," said the taller, and, apparently, the older one of the two.

"This man has not advanced very far in his studies," thought Mr. Mervorfield, "or else his text-books have been inferior."

"You 've a fine house here," said the other man.

"Oh! you are very good," replied Mr. Mervorfield. "Yes, it is an extremely pretty place, I think. My father ——"

"Can we look through it?"

"With the greatest of pleasure! I will show you the way. This hall, as you see, leads to ——"

"We sha'n't need you," said the man who had first spoken. "We 'll just look around by ourselves."

"Certainly," said Mr. Mervorfield. "Pardon my apparent obtrusiveness. Shall I ever learn not to force myself upon the society of those who wish to be alone!" added he to himself, with a sigh, as he sat down again and resumed his book.

The two men proceeded to inspect the house, looking into each room, and examining, especially, the locks of the doors. Mrs. Mervorfield had gone out to walk with her son and daughter, and Mrs. Praddlevane was not disturbed by the visitors, as she sat with her back to the door, and did not hear them. So they were not molested.

"It 's a good crab to crack, Bill," said the older of the two.

"You mean 'a good crib,' Mike," said the other.

"I think it is 'crab,'" replied Mike.

Bill drew forth a small book, and, finding the place, pointed triumphantly to it.

"There, you see, the dictionary says 'crib' —I learned it last week."

"Well," said Mike, "it does seem as if I never should learn the lang—I mean, lingo. Never mind, there 's plenty of jewelry and silver-ware, and all that; but what I 'd like to see is a chest of plate—something really big."

Just then they reached the garret. A small door stood directly in front of them. They opened it, and saw, in the half light of the closet, a large, iron-bound chest.

"Look!" cried Mike, "here 's a rich swig for us, I 'll be bound!"

"You mean 'swag,' I suppose," said Bill. "Yes; see how heavy it is. I can hardly lift this end."

"That 's enough," said Mike; "let 's go now, and make our plans."

On their way out, they went again into the dining-room. The windows of this room looked upon the piazza, where Mr. Mervorfield was sitting, repeating to himself the new rule, which he was learning:

"*A gentleman overhearing, by chance, a conversation not intended for his ears, should never avail himself of any information that he may gain from it.*"

The weather was warm, and the windows were open. The blinds, however, were closed, but with their slats slightly parted; and through these came words which made Mr. Mervorfield's fin tremble on top of his head.

"We can break the fastenings of these windows, easy enough, Bill."

"Yes. Too easy. The door 's got a good strong lock on it. That 's the place for us to break into."

"I can't help having an opinion about them,"

said Mr. Mervorfield to himself. "They are burglars; but I 'll be even with them. I 'll pretend to be reading, but I 'll hear what they 've got to say; and then, look out, my fine fellows, if you try to get into this house! 'A gentleman overhearing, by chance, a conversation not intended for his ears, should never avail himself of any information that he may gain from it.' "

Great drops of perspiration oozed from his forehead. The book fell from his hand. He groaned, and picked it up.

"Oh, it can't be that it says 'never'!"

"A gentleman—*never*."

For the first time Mr. Mervorfield wished that he was not so courteous. But, no! This was a test. He would be true to his character.

At this moment the men emerged from the front door.

"Your house is very pleasant," said Bill. "You must enjoy it. Sit here all day and read, I suppose, and then at night lock up the whole house and go to bed."

"It 's none of your business whether I lock up the whole house or not," was what Mr. Mervorfield wanted to say. These men were undoubtedly burglars. How had he learned that?

From their conversation, which he had overheard. But his new rule told him that he had no right to avail himself of information obtained in such a way. He must wholly ignore what he had heard, and find out what they were by other means. They were not plumbers, or painters, or carpenters, who had been sent there. He had no right to assume that they were. He must consider them gentlemen who had a curiosity—no! not gentlemen—gentlemen had no curiosity—only *men*, who had a curiosity to see his house: his guests, in fact, for the time being.

All this flashed through Mr. Mervorfield's mind while he was coughing three times, and then he answered: "Yes, it is very pleasant indeed, here; although my whole time is not spent on this piazza. I busy myself in watching the gardener sometimes, and so the day passes agreeably; and then I lock up the house, take off my gloves, and retire. That is to say, I lock up every thing but the back door. The cook goes out in the evening, and she does n't like to carry a key."

"Well, I guess we 'll go along now," said Mike. "Good afternoon."

"Won't you take a glass of wine, or smoke a cigar?" said Mr. Mervorfield.

"No; wine goes to my head," said Mike.

"Smoking makes me sick," said Bill. "Good afternoon." And the two men walked out of the gate, leaving Mr. Mervorfield alone with the worst problem he had encountered since he began his studies.

"Mike," said Bill, "All we 've got to do is to walk into that back door."

Mike stopped short. "Look here, Bill," said he. "You and I have been together since we were little boys — I mean, 'cads'—I mean, 'kids.' We were always 'pills'——"

"Don't you mean 'pals'?" said Bill.

"Well, pills or pals,—we were always together. Many a day have we spent in my father's hayloft, reading the lives of Jack Shepard and Dick Turpin, and the weekly newspaper for boys, or any thing else we could get hold of about thieves; and you know that we both swore to be burglars when we grew up. When we did grow up, though, our parents forced us into the grocery business. We carried that on for two years, and failed; compromised with our creditors; and then were free to enter upon the career of crime for which we so long yearned. We bought a set of burglars' tools, and changed our names. (No one ever heard of burglars called Lemuel

Smith and Ezra Perkins!) You called yourself 'Bloody Bill,' and I called myself, 'Red-handed Mike'; and now, except that I can't learn the plaguey slang, we are prepared to enter upon the highest walks of our profession. Look at me, Bloody Smith—I mean, Bloody Bill! Do you think I have looked forward to being a daring outlaw,—do you think that I have studied these infernal words for six months,—do you think that I have called myself Red-handed Mike,—to lower myself to the work of a snake—I mean a sneak-thief? No, sir! If we get into that house, it will not be through any open back-door; it will only be after we have tried every ruse known to the most accomplished masters of our craft."

II.

"——— Though perils did
Abound, as thick as thought could make them, and
Appear in forms more horrid; yet my duty,
As doth a rock against the chiding flood,
Should the approach of this wild river break,
And stand unshaken."

"Ever esteeméd duty pricks me on."

That evening, at supper, Mr. Mervorfield vainly endeavored to conceal the agitation

which he felt. He tried hard to recall certain precepts which he had learned, about preserving an unruffled exterior when the mind was disturbed; but he could not collect his thoughts; and a sickly smile failed to conceal his manifest uneasiness.

Mrs. Praddlevane's watchful eye detected it at once. "Mervorfield," said she, "what is the matter?"

"Why do you ask such a ——?" began Mr. Mervorfield; but, remembering that a gentleman should never ask a lady a direct question, he tried to laugh composedly, and said, "Oh, nothing, nothing, I assure you, my dear madam!"

"Any one, to look at you, would think that there were thieves in the house," said his mother-in-law.

Mr. Mervorfield could not restrain a slight start at this, and Hector Achilles, turning very pale, said:

"Is it thieves?"

Mrs. Mervorfield, watching both her son and her husband, turned pale, but tried to appear composed.

"It *is* thieves!" said Mrs. Praddlevane. "Not a wink do I sleep this night, I shall bolt my door, and sit up until morning."

Mr. Mervorfield did not know what to do. His new rule forbade him to speak, and an old rule, in "How to be Agreeable," told him to avoid unpleasant subjects in conversing with ladies, and particularly mentioned "Thieves," as a topic to be avoided. Mrs. Mervorfield had, at first, suffered considerably from her husband's rigid observance of this rule, when they were out walking; for she never saw where she was going, and had once even fallen into a large ditch, full of water. Undoubtedly, tumbling into a ditch is disagreeable. Mr. Mervorfield felt, that, as a gentleman, he could not possibly speak of it to a lady. Still, it was with great difficulty that he restrained himself from uttering the warning which rose to his lips. Afterwards, he was full of sympathy—of which he had made a special study. Mrs. Mervorfield had finally learned that when her husband said, "Ahem!" it was just as well to look about her.

Mr. Mervorfield decided, on the present occasion, to talk as well as he could about subjects of general interest, and to eat some supper, if it were possible to do so. The weather for the preceding month, and some very nice cold tongue on the table, assisted him to carry out his plan with some degree of success.

Mrs. Praddlevane soon left the table in a high state of excitement, locked herself into her room, and piled some chairs against the door.

Hector Achilles went out to a hardware-store and bought a burglar alarm.

The mother and daughter were left alone. Mrs. Mervorfield, glancing timidly at Forella Bella's untroubled face, inquired:

"Are you not afraid, dear?"

"I do not know," said Forella Bella, her ample chest expanding with a sigh, as she rose from the table, and paced the room with Amazonian strides;—"I do not know, dear mother; I have never seen a burglar. But I can try. I can learn to be afraid of this new danger, I have no doubt. I have learned to be afraid of cows and sheep, and a burglar can't be any harder than they were,"—and she resolved to peep out and see them that night, if they came, determined to strengthen her character by adding to it a new weakness.

Bedtime came; Forella Bella retired, and, leaving her door ajar, lay awake, expectant and hopeful. Hector Achilles placed his new burglar alarm near his bed, locked and bolted his door, and covered his head with the bed-clothes. Mrs. Mervorfield, whose mind had been in a

state of vacillation all the evening, went to bed in no state of mind at all; and would have lain awake all night, if she had not fallen asleep while she was resolving not to close her eyes until morning.

Mr. Mervorfield hesitated long before going to bed. He was greatly agitated, and, at one time, the temptation of the afternoon, to profit by what he had heard of the strangers' conversation, came upon him so strongly that he was very near sending out for a policeman. There was a vague feeling in his breast, that his wife and children might have claims to his consideration almost equal to those of two men whom he had never seen before. But he could not think it over coolly, and his books gave him no help. There was no exception to the rule, so far as he could see,—no reservation as to the audible conversation of burglars. No! for him there could be but one course. It was a crucial test of his gentlemanly integrity; and he must be true to himself, or forfeit forever that self-esteem which he had been so long and so patiently accumulating. Resigning himself to whatever might befall, he went to bed, pensively murmuring – "Noblesse oblige!"

III.

" ——— I had else been perfect ;
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock ;
As broad and general as the casing air."

It was past midnight when Mr. Mervorfield was awakened from the fitful slumber into which he had fallen, by the sound of footsteps moving about the house. He lay quiet as they passed Mrs. Praddlevane's door, but as they ascended the stairs, and approached Hector Achilles's room, he suffered an agony of apprehension.

" Oh ! if Hector Achilles had only practised his trait faithfully ! He might have been ready for these men ; and there is no reason why he should not attack them. He is not a gentleman, and, even if he were, he has not overheard any of their conversation. Poor Forella Bella too ! She has worked so hard—she has become so timid ! Alas ! They will frighten her to death ! They ? I cannot be sure that it is not some one else ! Oh, blessed thought ! This, at least, I may ascertain without dishonor ! "

He rose quietly from his bed, and—forgetting in his excitement, his scanty raiment—opened the door, and, in a moment, was at the foot of the stairs leading to the attic. There he stood, peering into the darkness above.

" What can they want there ? " said he to

himself. "What *is* there there? Nothing but the box containing Mrs. Praddlevane's old pewter tea-service. Oh, if they would but take that—we need never have it out again! I will help them if they want me to."

He prepared to ascend the stairs, when suddenly a vivid flash of light, full in his eyes, blinded him, and caused him to recoil, while a voice above exclaimed in a tone of horror—"Great Scott!"

It was Bill, who had somehow managed to open the slide of the dark lantern at the wrong moment, and now retreated hurriedly into the attic, where Mike was getting the tools ready to attack the chest.

"Here comes Mr. Mervorfield!" said Bill. "What shall we do?"

"Do!" answered Mike. "Prepare to sell our lives as dearly as possible. Is he armed?"

"I think not," said Bill.

"Of course not!" said Mike. "No combat, no bloodshed—no any thing. Just my luck! What 's that?"

An indistinct figure, clothed in white, appeared in the door-way.

"Hold!" cried Mike. "Advance but a step on the peril of your life and you pass over my dead body!"

"That does n't sound quite right," said Bill.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Mervorfield. "What *do* you mean? I heard you come up stairs; and, as there is nothing here but the chest in the closet, I thought that you might perhaps wish to—ah—borrow some thing from it; in which case, I shall be very happy to assist you to the extent of my ability."

"Well, this about settles it!" said Mike, in a low voice, to his companion. "This is the finishing touch! We go to rob a house, and here the man himself comes up and offers to help us! We are foiled! foiled!"

"Are we?" said Bill. "What ought we to do when we are foiled?"

"Why, I suppose we ought to go away, muttering hideous curses. That 's the only thing left to do now. You go on, and do it."

"I can't, I 've got the lantern to attend to," said Bill. "You do it."

"Oh, pshaw!" said Mike, "I 've got all these tools to carry. Go on—say some thing!"

"I can say, 'Bless my Soul!' and 'Great Scott!'" said Bill, "if that will do."

"Well, it is n't much; but it 's better than nothing, I suppose," said Mike. And the next moment, Mr. Mervorfield was startled by another blaze of light, and then two men, one muttering to himself, passed by him, and de-

scending the stairs, left the house, slamming the street door angrily.

Mr. Mervorfield stood for a moment, dumbfounded. What miracle was this? These men, who, he now felt sure, were robbers, had left him and his unharmed. And what had effected this marvel? Simple fidelity to his character as a gentleman. He had been true. He was a perfect gentleman. But was he not more? He had been faithful in all the examples of all the text-books, before; but now he had been faithful in an unheard-of, an inconceivable trial—one unforeseen by any of the masters whom he had made his guides and counsellors. As this dawned upon him, there flashed through his mind a new thought—a thought of such dazzling import that he scarcely dared dwell upon it. Agitated beyond measure, he presses his hands upon his throbbing heart—what is this flimsy garment which he clutches? He raises his hands to his head—horror!—"And in this fantastic garb I have appeared before two strangers!"—The light of joy flees from his face; his eyes are fixed in blank despair; he clings trembling to the doorpost, while from his lips breaks the agonized cry—"Alas! if it were not for this, I should be the most perfect gentleman that ever lived."

## JAMES JEFFREY ROCHE.[1]

(BORN, 1847.)

### THE V-A-S-E.

FROM the madding crowd they stand apart,
The maidens four and the Work of Art;

And none might tell from sight alone
In which had Culture ripest grown—

The Gotham Million fair to see,
The Philadelphia Pedigree,

The Boston Mind of azure hue,
Or the soulful Soul from Kalamazoo—

For all loved Art in a seemly way,
With an earnest soul and a capital A.

. . . . . .

Long they worshipped; but no one broke
The sacred stillness, until upspoke

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xxxii.

The Western one from the nameless place,
Who, blushing, said: "What a lovely vase!"

Over three faces a sad smile flew,
And they edged away from Kalamazoo.

But Gotham's haughty soul was stirred
To crush the stranger with one small word.

Deftly hiding reproof in praise,
She cries: "'T is, indeed, a lovely vaze!"

But brief her unworthy triumph when
The lofty one from the house of Penn,

With the consciousness of two grandpapas,
Exclaims: "It is quite a lovely vahs!"

And glances round with an anxious thrill,
Awaiting the word of Beacon Hill.

But the Boston maid smiles courteouslee
And gently murmurs: "Oh, pardon me!

"I did not catch your remark, because
I was so entranced with that charming vaws!"

*Dies erit prægelida*
*Sinistra quum Bostonia.*

—*Life's Verses.*

## ELISABETH CAVAZZA.

(BORN, 1848.)

### ALGERNON, THE FOOT-STOOL BEARER.

A TRAGEDY.

*The Persons.*

Algernon Charles Swinburne, a Poet.
Robert Browning, a Poet.
Chorus of Club-men.

THE ARGUMENT.

*Robert, being set in his house and minded to work, is made aware that to him entereth Algernon, having in the hands of him a footstool whereupon to sit at the feet of Robert, for sake of the fame of this poet. But he, misliking the laughter of men, is at last brought to speak a lie that he may be rid of this guest; yet is presently judged, and a measure of further weariness meted out to him, than which he could bear no more.*

THE DRAMA.

*Chorus.*

Say we, declare we, why in such a storm
Delay we, standing in the street-cornér;
Is this the kind of weather we prefer?
Club members, shall we call this thing good form?
For our umbrellas drip,
And our wet ulsters cling about our knees,
And in the mud we slip,
And we are cold as men carved on some marble frieze.

We are not here of choice, nor yet because
We fancy fog and falling rain at all;
But Algernon takes his constitutional,
And he is not constrained of any laws
Of the barometer;
And, careless of what weather heaven sends,
It did to him occur
This morning to fare forth to visit certain friends.

A footstool Algernon in his hands doth bear:
With gum goloshes for his over-shoon
He treads as softly as a summer moon

Moving through dusky heights of slumberous air;
And we may not surmise
The reason and rhyme of this, and we remain
Astare with wondering eyes,
And follow him afar this marvel to explain.

Yea have we followed him at least a mile,
And we have met thereby with many men,
And we have noted how each citizen
Looked upon Algernon with a furtive smile;
And still he went before,
And not the less his footstool did he bear,
Till here at Robert's door
He rang, yea, and our eyes have seen him enter there.

. . . . . .

*Semi-Chorus.*

Do you think we shall wait here till night,
Wet and fatigued as we are?

*Semi-Chorus.*

The average rainfall for the month is less
Than last year; and the average temperature
Higher, and higher the mean barometer.

*Semi-Chorus.*

Will any man lend me a light?
Has any man got a cigar?

*Semi-Chorus.*

Algernon stays too long; a morning call
Should not too much withhold the unwilling host
From work, and from the peace of work well done.

*Semi-Chorus.*

Our boots and our garments a-soak
Have dampened us through to the skin.

*Semi-Chorus.*

Yet we will see this thing through, even if we
Shiver and take a cold, and our wet feet
Bring us bronchitis and pneumonia.

*Semi-Chorus.*

And where is the point of this joke?
And where does the laughter come in?

*Semi-Chorus.*

Pray fate to give to Algernon for our sakes
Brief words and ways that he return to us
Before we are grown weary unto death.

. . . . . .

*Robert.*

May I inquire what have you i' th' arm?
A footstool!

*Algernon.*

Yea, a footstool. At thy feet
To sit as one who, serving the high gods,
With fear is fallen before them. Look on me,
The head of me hardly higher than thy feet,
And all mine hair made dark against the Day
And Martin of thy shoes, which with my tears
Shine, sir!

*Robert.*

How now, young man! Be ruled by me,
Sit in a chair like common folk; nay look
The folly o't i' the face. I 'm man, you 're man—
Not such-like each as other, it may be—
In some sort differing. Younger you than I—
That 's true—*o giorni della gioventu*
Hold hard—*o lieti giorni*—what 's the song?
Why thus it goes and so. Young man, rise up,
Somebody 's on the stair!

. . . . . .

*Algernon.*

Reverence of high things sought,
Not lightly left when found, and of the men

Made memorable and mighty of the muse—
These are for youth ; and thou, no more a youth,
Art crowned of all men's praises ; and lo, a leaf,
A little leaf of laurel lightly laid,
Lighter than lilies lie on limpid lakes,
Is overheavy for the honored head ;
If given of mine hands, hated.

*Robert.*

You mistake.
I have no personal dislike to you ;
But time flies fast (and yet meseems he lags ;
Why slowfoot, I could take you by the forelock
But for delaying you) I said, time flies.
(Have at you now, my long-haired tedium !)
Beg pardon, my young friend (Crook up your joints
Sir Pliable my spinal column, bend
To this man civilly,) Algernon, of your grace,
I must adjourn our interesting session,
I have a man awaits me round the corner,
And I have sworn by this and that to meet
Him at eleven sharp, and I must go.

*Algernon.*

Thou shalt pass from mine eyes as a light,
As a song from mine ears ;

I will walk in the borders of night
And the region of tears;
Thou wilt leave me unholpen, and lost in a desolate place
Made lonely for lack of the light and delight of thy face.

As Iphigenia was carried
In clouds light as lawn,
When the knife from the maiden was parried,
To fall on the fawn,—
Who is this that rends Robert away from my sight without sound?
What man, and what corner is this that he waiteth around?

I am covered with grief for a garment
And woe for a cloak;
Thou hast given my heart up to torment,
My neck to the yoke;
Yea what torment or yoke shall be sharper or heavier than this,
The gladness of greeting and madness of meeting to miss?

Have I help of the earth, or again
Of the strength of the sea?

Can I cry to the clouds, or complain
To the four winds set free?
Shall I hunt thee with lightning for spears and with thunder for hounds?
Will the earth stay the course of thy feet, or the sea set thee bounds?

As the snow that is sifted and taken
By blasts from the North,
So I, of thee suddenly shaken,
From thee must fare forth;
Thou hast scattered my spirit and breath of my body abroad
As the fields of the frost when the waters of winter are thawed.

Thou hast set on mine head sorrow's crown,
To remember good things;
Thou hast stricken the strength of me down
And hast broken my wings;
Thou hast quenched the quick flame of delight into ashes for fire,
And thy face and thy feet turn away from mine eyes that desire!

. . . . . .

*Chorus.*

He comes again, his footstool in his hand.

*Algernon.*

Yea, for these hands were met with Robert's feet.

*Chorus.*

An hour and five minutes by the clock.

*Algernon.*

A happy hour and measured oversoon.

*Chorus.*

Was Robert busy that you did not stay?

*Algernon.*

His word was given to meet a certain man.

*Chorus.*

Around the corner? All we know that man.

*Algernon.*

What man is this ye speak so lightly of?

*Chorus.*

A man who hath not life but in men's minds.

*Algernon.*

A ghost come forth again of the dead men's world?

*Chorus.*

More immaterial—one that never was.

. . . . . .

*Algernon.*

I am fallen, am fallen. Look ye, I forgive
False words, and false face set another way,
And him, the graven image of a lie,
Set up against the language of my lips,
Made for the injurious holding of my mouth,
To break and blast the beauty and blossom of
breath
With sudden silence. Yea these things have been.
And fare ye well, my friends: take thought of me,
For now I turn from hence to mine own house;
Have all your will of speech of all these things—
But I am speechless, and my words are done.

*Chorus.*

Who shall divide a judgment of these men,
Or mete the measure of their ill-done deeds?
Long words are wearisome; and yet again
False words are fallen fruit of evil seeds.
He that, desiring for man's overspeech
An end, and for himself that he escape,
Crieth to that strange god, an unseen shape,
Which hath no substance, and no name
but this,
The Man Around the Corner—doeth amiss,
And for his hair the Eumenides shall reach.

—*Portland Daily Press*, Sept. 25, 1880.

## GOOSE À LA MODE.

### MODERN VERSIFICATION ON ANCIENT THEMES.

#### MARY, QUITE CONTRARY.

*—Mary, Mary, quite contrary,*
*How does your garden grow?*

Within the garden's deepness filled of light
Stood Mary, and upon her fair green gown
Fell glory of gold hair, a stern sweet frown
Was on her forehead, slim cold hands and white
Made ending of her long pale arms' delight.
And questioning, I—"How does your garden grow?"
Then she—"With bells that ring, and shells that sing
Of strange gray seas, with fair, strong hands that cling
Together, stand tall damozels a-row."

D— G— R—.

#### THREE CHILDREN SLIDING.

*—Three children sliding on the ice*
*All on a summer's day.*

Four are the names of the seasons—spring, summer, autumn, and winter.
Summer is hot and winter is cold, while the others partake in

Greater or less degree of cold and caloric commingled.
Surely, I think, it is well to be good, and my mind is astonished
At the exceeding sin of sinfulness, whereof the perils
Shown in my verse are apparent. Three rosy children were sliding
Over the ice in summer and—fate so decreeing, it happened—
Fell through the ice and were drowned. Had these children in winter been sliding
On the bare earth, or had they, by the peaceful fireside sitting,
Studied their catechism, it were strange—so the novel thought strikes me—
Even in summer's heat had the ice broken suddenly under
Avoirdupois of these babes, and diluted the well-springs of pleasure.

M— F— T—.

JACK AND JILL.

*—Jack and Jill went up a hill*
*To draw a pail of water.*

What moan is made of the mountain, what sob of the hillside,

Why a lament of the south wind, and rainfall as tears?
Brother and sister, once bodies and spirits together,
Fell as fair ghosts down the sad swift slope of the years.

Where is the fount on the mount where the thrill of water
Sang as a siren its song to the steep beneath?
Where are the feet of the son and the fair-eyed daughter,
Feet drawn aside of Fate, and set in the pathway of Death!

Ah cruel earth and hard, ah pitiless laughter
Made of the waters—when, shattered his golden crown,
Fell the fair boy as a star, and his sister after
To the field of the dead, to its cold and the darkness unknown!

A— C— S—.

—*Portland Daily Press*, Nov. 23, 1875.

## SOPHIE SWETT.

(BORN, 1848.)

### MISS SPARROW'S HUSBAND.

MISS SPARROW sat at her breakfast table washing her dainty, quaintly-shaped, old-fashioned china and silver, as she had done every morning for twenty years. She was such a dainty little figure, herself, in her pretty breakfast-cap trimmed with bright ribbons, and her Watteau wrapper, that she looked as if she might have just stepped off one of her teacups. She had just the complexion of a Dresden china shepherdess, and it was very hard to believe that the sun and winds of thirty-seven years had had their chances of spoiling it; there was scarcely a girl of eighteen in Cherryfield who did not envy Miss Sparrow her complexion.

It was a snowy world outside; a deep, white coverlet stretched unbroken over fields and hills; but the sun streamed in at the bay-window,

setting the scarlet geraniums ablaze and the canary bird to singing his maddest; a deep-hearted fire glowed in the grate, and a huge cat industriously washed her face on a soft rug before it. Every thing was as cosey as possible, and Miss Sparrow looked the picture of content.

Everybody said that was the secret of her complexion,—she was always contented; but everybody is sometimes mistaken; it may have been preserved by wearing a brown veil, rather than by any moral or mental attributes. And there was a *soupçon* of powder in the right-hand drawer of Miss Sparrow's toilet-table. It gave Miss Sparrow's conscience a twinge to use it,—cosmetics were regarded with horror in Cherryfield,—but she said Eben liked to have her look as well as possible, and he always thought a great deal of her complexion. Eben was her husband, so, of course, it was quite justifiable.

As she washed her cups and saucers Miss Sparrow occasionally looked out over the snowy roads with a sort of expectancy in her face. There often was a sort of expectancy in Miss Sparrow's face, though it never seemed to mar its virtues.

"I snum to man if Desdemony ain't washin'

her face ag'in!" exclaimed Marthy Arabella, Miss Sparrow's handmaiden, pausing in her occupation of clearing the breakfast table to survey the cat with great interest. "That 's the third time this morning, and not a morsel of breakfast has she had, either; and, roads broke out or not, company 's a-comin'! I 'll go and make a batch of pies. I 've made many a batch on Desdemony's recommendation, and never hit it wrong yet!"

"You did n't happen to look at my tea-grounds this morning, did you?" asked Miss Sparrow, a little tremulously.

"You hain't seemed to care so much about hearin' your future lately; so I ha'n't thought of lookin' into your cup," replied Marthy Arabella; "but I 'll see if I can't tell some thing by the rensins of the teapot." And she poured the contents of the teapot into a saucer, and regarded them with an air of great solemnity and wisdom. "Bird flyin' with his head up, that 's good news; a letter comin' acrost the water; company from a distance;—did n't I tell you that cat wa'n't never deceitful?—dark-complected gentleman with a little girl has got a good heart for you."—"O Marthy Arabella!" interpolated Miss Sparrow, with a blush. "And

here 's a weddin'-ring as sure 's you live ; not a mite of a break in it, as there used to be sometimes, and was a terrible bad sign ; but just as round and perfect as you 'd wish to see ! I never see a mess of tea-grounds in my life that showed plainer signs of a weddin'."

"O Marthy Arabella !" exclaimed Miss Sparrow, in a tone of remonstrance, with a more vivid blush.

"As long as I 'm a-goin' to do up a bakin', anyhow, mebbe I might as well make a loaf of weddin'-cake."

"Marthy Arabella," said Miss Sparrow, this time in a tone of sad and serious reproof, "I should not think you would talk so when you *know*."

"Well, now and ag'in I git kind of sick of a shadder, and that 's the truth. He 's dretful consolin' in some ways, for he don't make no trouble to speak of. He don't stay out late nights, nor use no profane language, and 't ain't as if he was hearty to his victuals ! But if he ain't no great trouble he ain't no great company, either. Seems sometimes as if 't was lonesomer with him than 't would be without him."

It was rarely that Marthy Arabella spoke with so much force and freedom on this sub-

ject, although long association had made her rather a companion than a servant to her mistress. Miss Sparrow looked shocked and distressed.

"He has been a great comfort to me," she said. "I don't know what I should have done without Eben in all these years."

"I snum to goodness, if there ain't Doctor Bartley's gray mare a-strugglin' through the drifts! Patients must be terrible skurse with the doctor that he has to come clear'n up this hill a-huntin' 'em up such a mornin' as this!"

And Marthy Arabella looked cross-eyed,—a way that she always had when she tried to look facetious.

"Perhaps you had better carry Eben's cup and saucer away, *quick!*" said Miss Sparrow, in a little flurry. "The doctor might think it strange to see the table set for two."

"I should n't wonder if he did," remarked Marthy Arabella, confidentially, to herself, in the solitude of the kitchen. "It makes me feel a terrible sight like a Bellamite, sometimes, when I come to think of it, especially when Miss Sparrer 's away, and I ketch myself a-settin' Eben's slippers out before the fire, just as nateral as life!"

Then Marthy Arabella hurried to admit Dr. Bartley, a stout, middle-aged man with a cheery face and a big voice, and ushered him into the bright little room, and left him alone with Miss Sparrow and the cat and the bird.

"He 's a contrast to Miss Sparrow's present husband, no mistake!" remarked Marthy Arabella, looking cross-eyed, although there was nobody to see her. "And they both has their advantages and their disadvantages, like most things in this world; but if I was a-going to have my say about it I 'd rather have Dr. Bartley round the house than Eben. All men has aggravatin' ways, and you 've got to put up with a sight with the best of 'em; but Eben he 's jest like one of them poor-spirited creturs that never answers back, nor takes no notice when you blow 'em up, but is always settin' round under your feet. It 's my belief them 's the wearin'est kind. And when it comes to burglars there 's no doubt about the doctor havin' the advantage of Eben there!" And Marthy Arabella not only looked cross-eyed, but indulged in a little private giggle. "And bein' this is such a retired place I think it 's her duty to marry the doctor! And my knees is so weak under me for fear she won't, that it

seems as if I must set down; but if I did I should be terrible apt to set down too near that keyhole to be consistent with my Christian perfession; and set down I won't!"

Marthy Arabella's suspense was not of long duration. She soon heard the outer door close, and Miss Sparrow called "Marthy Arabella!" in a rather faint tone. After a brief delay she went into Miss Sparrow's presence, with a most indifferent and matter-of-fact look and manner.

"I 'm going to tell you something, Marthy Arabella!" said Miss Sparrow in a tremulous voice. "Dr. Bartley asked me, two weeks ago, to—to marry him!"

"I expect he did," said Marthy Arabella.

"I think it 's a *dreadful* thing," said Miss Sparrow.

"Do you, now?" said Marthy Arabella.

"On account of Eben."

"I don't expect Eben will have no actooal objections, or make no trouble about it," said Marthy Arabella, endeavoring to restrain a tendency to look cross-eyed.

Miss Sparrow perceived the effort, and her manner became invested in dignity.

"I don't expect you to sympathize with me,

Marthy Arabella. They are few who could do so, even in a much higher station than yours."

"It *ain't* hardly to be expected, seein' this is a world of solum realities," said Martha Arabella, quoting from the Cherryfield minister.

"But you have shown feeling for me, and have never gossipped about Eben, which would have made things very unpleasant for me, since there are so many practical and unimaginative people who would not understand."

"Folks would be apt to run of an idee that 't was kind of cur'us doin's, I expect," said Marthy Arabella. "I would n't heave out any thin' ag'in Eben for the world; but it does seem as if somethin' a little mite more substantial in a husband would be more enlivenin', to say nothin' of burglars."

"Dr. Bartley is one of a thousand," said Miss Sparrow. "But he is such a contrast to dear Eben, he almost shocks me. He talks so loud, and there 's such a creak to his great boots! I told him, at first, that I never could think of such a thing; but he would n't take no for an answer, and to-day I told him—I 'd think of it, and let him know next week. I don't think I *can* make up my mind to marry him, on account of Eben; but it is moving, Marthy

Arabella, to have a man so much in love with one, and to hear him plead so eloquently."

"Yes, indeed, I know how hard it is to harden one's heart ag'in 'em," said Marthy Arabella (who never had been known to have a sweetheart in her life).

"I have always felt that Eben would come back, and if he should find me unfaithful to him, married to another, his heart would be broken."

"Come back," exclaimed Marthy Arabella, in a tone of surprise. "Oh, yes! Eben Sutton. I do get kind of mixed up, and forget that Eben ever was anybody *real*. Seems as if you had made him up, altogether. But I remember Eben Sutton well enough; kind of a pretty-featured young man he was, with red hair. The Suttons all looked as if they was afire on top; but la! if they was they never set nothin' else afire—the shif'lessest set! I ain't sayin' nothin' against Eben, now, Miss Sparrer. I expect he was the likeliest of 'em, though he had n't no edication; but Suttons was Suttons, and you could n't make nothing else of 'em; there wa' n't faculty enough amongst 'em to keep 'em off 'n the town. Mebbe your father wa' n't right to separate you, but most folks

thought it was presumin' in a Sutton to think he was goin' to get Dr. Sparrer's daughter, and, Miss Sparrer, if you had married Eben Sutton it 's jest possible you might have been sorry for it afterwards! I suppose there might be such a thing as a Sutton turnin' out well; but it does seem cont'ry to nater!"

"Eben was very different from the others: he was noble and high-minded. He was wickedly slandered. It was a cruel thing to separate us, and my heart would have broken if I had not been able to look forward to a time when he would come back to me. And then, when I grew very weary of waiting, I fell to imagining that he had come. You know what a comfort that has been. Some people might think it silly, but sometimes I think I have been almost as happy in it as if I really had been Eben's wife."

"There *has* been advantages to it," admitted Marthy Arabella. "Never no disagreein' nor blamin' one another, nor tryin' to carry the day over one another."

"And, besides, I have always had the hope that Eben would come back some time."

"I ha'n't heard you say much about that, lately; seems to me I ha'n't heard you mention

it for as much as two years. Lemme see, ain't it about two years ago that Dr. Bartley came to Cherryfield?" said Marthy Arabella, reflectively.

Miss Sparrow evidently saw a connection between the two ideas, for her cheeks instantly matched the ribbons on her breakfast cap in hue.

"It has n't been altogether Dr. Bartley, Marthy Arabella. There 's little Nellie. I always did want a little girl, dreadfully. I 've tried to imagine one, but for some reason I never was able to do it, and I was afraid somebody would find it out, too. They would have made even more fun of that than of Eben. You know I 've never let even you see a little plate that I have put on the table between Eben's and mine, sometimes; a little plate and knife and fork, and a silver mug; but it never was of any use. I could n't imagine her! It has been easy to imagine Eben, because I have never forgotten just how he looked; sometimes I am afraid that I have n't been able to change his looks enough; that he is altogether too young for me, though he is graver than when I saw him last, and very dignified and elegant. I fancy him a minister, you know; not that I

ever knew of his having any disposition that way, but I like ministers, and he may be one, you know. There 's one great advantage about an uncertainty, Marthy Arabella: you can always think that it *may be* just what you want to have it. Now, Dr. Bartley is such a certainty that there 's something quite terrifying about him."

"I suppose there might be one likely one in a shif'less family; but it does seem queer to think of one of them Suttons bein' godly-given!" said Marthy Arabella.

Beyond a dignified look, Miss Sparrow took no notice of this remark.

"As I was saying," she went on, "until I saw little Nellie Bartley I have never been able to imagine a little girl for myself. Now, it is she that I fancy sitting beside me, and I think it is for her sake that I have grown to—to think a good deal of Dr. Bartley."

"You 'd better say yes, and fetch him and Nellie right home, considerin' burglars and all," said Marthy Arabella.

"But, then, what if Eben should come back and find all his hopes shattered? Poor Eben! how would he bear it?" And Miss Sparrow applied her handkerchief daintily to her eyes.

"Mebbe he 's married himself. He ha'n't come, nor wrote, nor give no sign for twenty years," said Marthy Arabella, cruelly.

"O Marthy Arabella!" exclaimed Miss Sparrow, with a little shriek. "Eben was the soul of truth and honor! And he never could love anybody but me; he always said so. Sometimes I think he must be dead. If he is not he is engaged in some great and noble work to which he is sacrificing his happiness; he may have gone as a missionary to heathen lands. I often look for his name among those of the great explorers who are doing such noble work for mankind. If he is alive, only some such noble enterprise could have kept Eben from me."

Marthy Arabella was speechless; but as soon as she had retired to the privacy of the kitchen she exclaimed with uplifted hands: "La, what a thing it is to have an imagination!"

For the rest of the day Miss Sparrow seemed absorbed in reflection, and Marthy Arabella considered that the cause she favored was best secured by judicious silence.

But it was trying, for Marthy Arabella was, as she was fond of describing herself, "a sociable cretur'"; and as they lived more than half

a mile from the village, and the roads were only partially broken out, they had not been favored with a caller that day. In spite of Desdemona's prediction nobody seemed to be coming.

"I declare if that tin-peddler's wagon on runners ain't a blessed sight!" exclaimed Marthy Arabella, as she looked out of the window that afternoon. "There has n't been more 'n half a dozen sleighs by here to-day. Mebbe it 's because there 's so many sick with the measles that folks are so quiet. They say there 's a rag hangin' out of every other window in the village to call the doctor, on account of measles. That blessed tin-peddler is a-comin' in, and I declare it 's a comfort to see the face of a Christian—though if it 's Lon Saunders, from Milltown, as I expect it is, he ain't no great of a Christian!"

Miss Sparrow was "doing up" some laces by the kitchen table; she was particular about her laces, and always attended to them herself. The tin-peddler gave a rousing knock at the back door, and immediately opened it, stamping the snow off his boots.

"Don't s'pose you want to do any tradin' to-day?" he inquired, cheerfully.

"You might step in and warm yourself, Mr. Saunders. Oh, you ain't Mr. Saunders, be you?" said Marthy Arabella.

"Jest as good a man every whit," returned the peddler, promptly. "I 've bought him out. I expect I sh'an't be so sharp as he was, bein' new to the business, so now 's your time to get a good bargain."

"Stranger in these parts?" inquired Marthy Arabella, glad of the opportunity for a little sociability.

"Well, I be, and I ain't. I ain't been nigh here for twenty years, but I was brought up down here in Cherryfield village."

"You don't say?" said Marthy Arabella, scrutinizing him carefully.

He was a short, stout man, with a coarse red face, and reddish hair and beard sprinkled with gray.

"Yes, I went away from here when I was twenty-two or three, and mebbe I should have done better to stay, for I ha'n't had any luck and then, there was a rich man's daughter dead in love with me; the old man was down on me but she would have had me whether or no, and she was an only child, so she 'd been sure of the money some day. But she was terrible soft

putty wa'n't a circumstance to her, and I got awful sick of her. I s'pose she 's married or dead by this time. You don't happen to know what 's become of old Dr. Sparrow's daughter, do you?"

Marthy Arabella cast a hasty glance around, but Miss Sparrow had slipped out of the room, leaving the door ajar, however. "I ain't so very well acquainted, livin' so far from the village," said Marthy Arabella, evasively. "I don't know as I want any tinware to-day, but I 'll save up my rags for you against the next time you come round."

"All right, but mebbe I sha'n't stick to it long. I ain't apt to stick to things a great while if they don't suit me, and tin-peddlin' is poor business. But when a man has got a wife and eight children to support, he 's got to stir round lively."

"Good-day, Mr.——Oh, what did you say your name was?" Marthy Arabella called after him.

"Sutton—Eben Sutton; begins with an S, like Saunders, so you can remember it."

"I ain't likely to forget it!" murmured Marthy Arabella.

"Oh, land of mercy! who would have thought

it? But yet it 's jest as nateral as life! What a thing imagination is to run away with folks' idees."

Marthy Arabella turned towards the sitting-room; but the door closed just then, more forcibly than Marthy Arabella had ever heard Miss Sparrow close a door.

Marthy Arabella stood irresolute for a moment, then ran hastily up to the attic, and hung her red calico apron out of the window.

It was almost dark when the jingle of sleigh-bells came nearer and nearer and stopped at the gate.

Miss Sparrow looked out, and saw, with amazement, Dr. Bartley coming up the steps.

"Don't you be mad, now," said Marthy Arabella, hurriedly; "I hung a rag out, and he thinks it 's measles. I thought it would be terrible kind of consolin' to have him come jest now, and so comfortable to have things settled right up without no delay."

Miss Sparrow applied her handkerchief to her eyes. "I suppose you understand, Marthy Arabella, that it is all on account of little Nellie," she said.

Marthy Arabella said nothing, but she looked cross-eyed.—*Outing*, June, 1884.

## JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS.[1]

(BORN, 1848.)

### UNCLE REMUS INITIATES THE LITTLE BOY.

ONE evening recently, the lady whom Uncle Remus calls "Miss Sally" missed her little seven-year-old. Making search for him through the house and through the yard, she heard the sound of voices in the old man's cabin, and, looking through the window, saw the child sitting by Uncle Remus. His head rested against the old man's arm, and he was gazing with an expression of the most intense interest into the rough, weather-beaten face, that beamed so kindly upon him. This is what "Miss Sally" heard:

"Bimeby, one day, arter Brer Fox bin doin' all dat he could fer ter ketch Brer Rabbit, en Brer Rabbit bin doin' all he could fer ter keep 'im fum it, Brer Fox say to hisse'f dat he 'd put up a game on Brer Rabbit, en he ain't mo'n got de wuds out'n his mouf twel Brer Rabbit come

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xxv.

a lopin' up de big road, lookin' des ez plump, en ez fat, en ez sassy ez a Moggin hoss in a barley-patch.

"'Hol' on dar, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"'I ain't got time, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, sorter mendin' his licks.

"'I wanter have some confab wid you, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"'All right, Brer Fox, but you better holler fum whar you stan', I 'm monstus full er fleas dis mawnin',' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"'I seed Brer B'ar yistiddy,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'en he sorter rake me over de coals kaze you en me ain't make frens en live naberly, en I tole 'im dat I 'd see you.'

"Den Brer Rabbit scratch one year wid his off hine-foot sorter jub'usly, en den he ups en sez, sezee:

"'All a settin', Brer Fox. Spose'n you drap roun' ter morrer en take dinner wid me. We ain't got no great doin's at our house, but I speck de ole 'oman en de chilluns kin sorter scramble roun' en git up sump'n fer ter stay yo' stummuck.'

"'I 'm 'gree'ble, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"'Den I 'll 'pen' on you,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"Nex' day, Mr. Rabbit an' Miss Rabbit got up soon, 'fo' day, en raided on a gyarden like Miss Sally's out dar, en got some cabbiges, en some roas'n years, en some sparrer-grass, en dey fix up a smashin' dinner. Bimeby one er de little Rabbits, playin' out in de back-yard, come runnin' in hollerin', 'Oh, ma! oh, ma! I seed Mr. Fox a comin'!' En den Brer Rabbit he tuck de chilluns by der years en make um set down, en den him en Miss Rabbit sorter dally roun' waiten' for Brer Fox. En dey keep on waitin', but no Brer Fox ain't come. Atter while Brer Rabbit goes to de do', easy like, en peep out, en dar, stickin' out fum behime de cornder, wuz de tip-een' er Brer Fox tail. Den Brer Rabbit shot de do' en sot down, en put his paws behime his years en begin fer ter sing:

"'De place wharbouts you spill de grease,
Right dar youer boun' ter slide,
An' whar you fine a bunch er ha'r,
You 'll sholy fine de hide!'

"Nex' day, Brer Fox sont word by Mr. Mink, en skuze hisse'f kaze he wuz too sick fer ter come, en he ax Brer Rabbit fer ter come en

take dinner wid him, en Brer Rabbit say he wuz 'gree'ble.

"Bimeby, w'en de shadders wuz at der shortes', Brer Rabbit he sorter brush up en santer down ter Brer Fox's house, en w'en he got dar, he yer somebody groanin', en he look in de do' en dar he see Brer Fox settin' up in a rockin' cheer all wrop up wid flannil, en he look mighty weak. Brer Rabbit look all 'roun', he did, but he ain't see no dinner. De dish-pan wuz settin' on de table, en close by wuz a kyarvin' knife.

"'Look like you gwineter have chicken fer dinner, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"'Yes, Brer Rabbit, deyer nice, en fresh, en tender,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"Den Brer Rabbit sorter pull his mustarsh, en say: 'You ain't got no calamus root, is you, Brer Fox? I done got so now dat I can't eat no chicken 'ceppin she 's seasoned up wid calamus root.' En wid dat Brer Rabbit lipt out er de do' and dodge 'mong de bushes, en sot dar watchin' fer Brer Fox; en he ain't watch long, nudder, kaze Brer Fox flung off de flannil en crope out er de house en got whar he could close in on Brer Rabbit, en bimeby Brer Rabbit holler out: 'Oh, Brer Fox! I 'll des put yo'

calamus root out yer on dis yer stump. Better come git it while hits fresh,' and wid dat Brer Rabbit gallop off home. En Brer Fox ain't never kotch 'im yit, en w'at 's mo', honey, he ain't gwineter."—*Uncle Remus.*

THE WONDERFUL TAR-BABY STORY.

"Did n't the fox *never* catch the rabbit, Uncle Remus?' asked the little boy the next evening.

"He come mighty nigh it, honey, sho's you bawn—Brer Fox did. One day atter Brer Rabbit fool 'im wid dat calamus root, Brer Fox went ter wuk en got 'im some tar, en mix it wid some turkentime, en fix up a contrapshun wat he call a Tar-Baby, en he tuck dish yer Tar-Baby en he sot 'er in de big road, en den he lay off in de bushes fer ter see wat de news wuz gwineter be. En he did n't hatter wait long, nudder, kaze bimeby here come Brer Rabbit pacin' down de road—lippity-clippity, clippity-lippity—dez ez sassy ez a jay-bird. Brer Fox, he lay low. Brer Rabbit come prancin' long twel he spy de Tar-Baby, en den he fotch up on his behime legs like he was 'stonished. De Tar-Baby, she sot dar, she did, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"'Mawnin'!' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee—'nice wedder dis mawnin',' sezee.

"Tar-Baby ain't sayin' nuthin', en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"'How duz yo' sym'tums seem ter segashuate?' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"Brer Fox, he wink his eye slow, en lay low, en de Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nuthin'.

"'How you come on, den? Is you deaf?' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. 'Kaze if you is, I kin holler louder,' sezee.

"Tar-Baby stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"'Youer stuck up, dat 's w'at you is,' says Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'en I 'm gwineter kyore you, dat 's w'at I 'm a gwineter do,' sezee.

"Brer Fox, he sorter chuckle in his stummuck, he did, but Tar-Baby ain't sayin' nuthin'.

"'I 'm gwineter larn you howter talk ter 'specttubble fokes ef hits de las' ack,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. 'Ef you don't take off dat hat en tell me howdy, I 'm gwineter bus' you wide open,' sezee.

"Tar-Baby stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"Brer Rabbit keep on axin' 'im, en de Tar-Baby, she keep on sayin' nuthin', twel present'y

Brer Rabbit draw back wid his fis', he did, en blip he tuck er side er de head. Right dar 's whar he broke his merlasses jug. His fis' stuck, en he can't pull loose. De tar hilt him. But Tar-Baby, she stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"' Ef you don't lemme loose, I 'll knock you agin,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, en wid dat he fotch 'er a wipe wid de udder han', en dat stuck. Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nuthin,' en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"'Tu'n me loose, fo' I kick de natal stuffin' outen you,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, but de Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nuthin'. She des hilt on, en den Brer Rabbit lose de use er his feet in de same way. Brer Fox, he lay low. Den Brer Rabbit squall out dat ef de Tar-Baby don't tu'n 'im loose he butt 'er crank-sided. En den he butted, en his head got stuck. Den Brer Fox, he sa'ntered fort,' lookin' des ez innercent ez wunner yo' mammy's mockin'-birds.

"' Howdy, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee. 'You look sorter stuck up dis mawnin',' sezee, en den he rolled on de groun', en laft en laft twel he could n't laff no mo'. 'I speck you 'll take dinner wid me dis time, Brer Rabbit. I

done laid in some calamus root, en I ain't gwineter take no skuse,' sez Brer Fox, sezee."

Here Uncle Remus paused, and drew a two-pound yam out of the ashes.

"Did the fox eat the rabbit?" asked the little boy to whom the story had been told.

"Dat 's all de fur de tale goes," replied the old man. "He mout, en den agin he moutent. Some say Jedge B'ar come 'long en loosed 'im —some say he did n't. I hear Miss Sally callin'. You better run 'long."—*Uncle Remus.*

## HOW MR. RABBIT WAS TOO SHARP FOR MR. FOX.

"Uncle Remus," said the little boy one evening, when he had found the old man with little or nothing to do, "did the fox kill and eat the rabbit when he caught him with the Tar-Baby?"

"Law, honey, ain't I tell you 'bout dat?" replied the old darkey, chuckling slyly. "I 'clar ter grashus I ought er tole you dat, but ole man Nod wuz ridin' on my eyeleds 'twel a leetle mo'n I 'd a dis'member'd my own name, en den on to dat here come yo' mammy hollerin' atter you.

"W'at I tell you w'en I fus' begin? I tole

you Brer Rabbit wuz a monstus soon beas'; leas' ways dat 's w'at I laid out fer ter tell you. Well, den, honey, don't you go en make no udder kalkalashuns, kaze in dem days Brer Rabbit en his family wuz at de head er de gang w'en enny racket wuz on han', en dar dey stayed. 'Fo' you begins fer ter wipe yo' eyes 'bout Brer Rabbit, you wait en see whar'bouts Brer Rabbit gwineter fetch up at. But dat 's needer yer ner dar.

"W'en Brer Fox fine Brer Rabbit mixt up wid de Tar-Baby, he feel mighty good, en he roll on de groun' en laff. Bimeby he up 'n say, sezee:

"'Well, I speck I got you dis time, Brer Rabbit,' sezee; 'may-be I ain't, but I speck I is. You been runnin' roun' here sassin' atter me a mighty long time, but I speck you done come ter de een' er de row. You bin cuttin' up yo' capers en bouncin' 'roun' in dis naberhood ontwel you come ter b'leeve yo'se'f de boss er de whole gang. En den youer allers some'rs whar you got no bizness,' sez Brer Fox, sezee. 'Who ax you fer ter come en strike up a 'quaintence wid dish yer Tar-Baby? En who stuck you up dar whar you iz? Nobody in de roun' worril. You des tuck en jam yo'se'f on

dat Tar-Baby widout waitin' fer enny invite,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'en dar you is, en dar you 'll stay twel I fixes up a bresh-pile and fires her up, kaze I 'm gwineter bobbycue you dis day, sho,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"Den Brer Rabbit talk mighty 'umble.

"'I don't keer w'at you do wid me, Brer Fox,' sezee, 'so you don't fling me in dat brier-patch. Roas' me, Brer Fox,' sezee, 'but don't fling me in that brier-patch,' sezee.

"'Hit 's so much trouble fer ter kindle a fier,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'dat I speck I 'll hatter hang you," sezee.

"'Hang me des ez high as you please, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'but do fer de Lord's sake don't fling me in dat brier-patch,' sezee.

"'I ain't got no string," sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'en now I speck I 'll hatter drown you,' sezee.

"'Drown me des ez deep ez you please, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'but do don't fling me in dat brier-patch,' sezee.

"'Dey ain't no water nigh,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'en now I speck I 'll hatter skin you,' sezee.

"'Skin me, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'snatch out my eyeballs, t'ar out my

years by de roots, en cut off my legs,' sezee, 'but do please, Brer Fox, don't fling me in dat brier-patch,' sezee.

"Co'se Brer Fox wanter hurt Brer Rabbit bad ez he kin, so he cotch 'im by de behime legs en slung 'im right in the middle er de brier-patch. Dar wuz a considerbul flutter whar Brer Rabbit struck de bushes, en Brer Fox sorter hang 'roun' fer ter see w'at wuz gwineter happen. Bimeby he hear somebody call 'im, en way up de hill he see Brer Rabbit settin' cross-legged on a chinkapin log koamin' de pitch outen his har wid a chip. Den Brer Fox know dat he bin swop off mighty bad. Brer Rabbit wuz bleedzed fer ter fling back some er his sass, en he holler out:

"'Bred en bawn in a brier-patch, Brer Fox —bred en bawn in a brier-patch!' en wid dat he skip out des ez lively ez a cricket in de embers."—*Uncle Remus.*

## MR. TERRAPIN SHOWS HIS STRENGTH.

"Brer Tarrypin wuz de out'nes' man," said Uncle Remus, rubbing his hands together contemplatively, and chuckling to himself in a very significant manner; "he wuz de out'nes' man er de whole gang, he wuz dat."

The little boy sat perfectly quiet, betraying no impatience when Uncle Remus paused to hunt, first in one pocket and then in another, for enough crumbs of tobacco to replenish his pipe. Presently the old man proceeded:

"One night Miss Meadows en de gals dey gun a candy-pullin', en so many er de nabers come in 'sponse ter de invite dat dey hatter put de 'lasses in de wash pot en b'il' de fier in de yard. Brer B'ar, he hope * Miss Meadows bring de wood, Brer Fox he men' de fier, Brer Wolf, he kep' de dogs off, Brer Rabbit, he grease de bottom er de plates fer ter keep de candy fum stickin', en Brer Tarrypin, he klum up in a cheer, en say he 'd watch en see dat de 'lasses did n't bile over. Dey wuz all dere, en dey wern't cuttin' up no didos, nudder, kase Miss Meadows, she done put her foot down, she did, en say dat w'en dey come ter her place dey hatter hang up a flag er truce at de front gate en 'bide by it.

"Well, den, w'iles dey wuz all a settin' dar en de 'lasses wuz a bilin' en a blubberin', dey got ter runnin' en talkin' mighty biggity. Brer Rabbit, he say he de swiffes'; but Brer Tarrypin, he rock 'long in de cheer en watch the

* Holp; helped.

'lasses. Brer Fox, he say he de sharpes', but Brer Tarrypin, he rock 'long. Brer Wolf, he say he de mos' suvvigus, but Brer Tarrypin, he rock en he rock 'long. Brer B'ar, he say he de mos' stronges', but Brer Tarrypin, he rock, en he keep on rockin'. Bimeby he sorter shet one eye, en say, sezee:

"'Hit look like 'periently dat de ole hard-shell ain't nowhars 'longside er dis crowd, yit yer I is, en I 'm de same man w'at show Brer Rabbit dat he ain't de swiffes'; en I 'm de same man w'at kin show Brer B'ar dat he ain't de stronges',' sezee.

"Den dey all laff en holler, kaze it look like Brer B'ar mo' stronger dan a steer. Bimeby Miss Meadows, she up 'n ax, she did, how he gwine do it.

"'Gimme a good strong rope,' sez Brer Tarrypin, sezee, 'en lemme git in er puddle er water, en den let Brer B'ar see ef he kin pull me out,' sezee.

"Den dey all laff 'g'in, en Brer B'ar, he ups en sez, sezee: 'We ain't got no rope,' sezee.

"'No,' sez Brer Tarrypin, sezee, 'en needer is you got de strenk,' sezee, en den Brer Tarrypin, he rock en rock 'long, en watch de 'lasses a bilin' en a blubberin'.

"Atter w'ile Miss Meadows, she up en say, she did, dat she 'd take 'n loan de young men her bed-cord, en w'iles de candy wuz a coolin' in de plates, dey could all go ter de branch en see Brer Tarrypin kyar out his projick. Brer Tarrypin," continued Uncle Remus in a tone at once confidential and argumentative, "wer' n't much bigger 'n de pa'm er my han', en it look mighty funny fer ter year 'im braggin' 'bout how he kin outpull Brer B'ar. But dey got de bed-cord atter w'ile, en den dey all put out ter de branch. W'en Brer Tarrypin fine de place he wanter, he tuck one een' er de bed-cord, en gun de yuther een' to Brer B'ar.

"'Now den ladies en gents,' sez Brer Tarrypin, sezee, 'you all go wid Brer B'ar up dar in de woods en I 'll stay yer, en w'en you year me holler, den 's de time fer Brer B'ar fer ter see ef he kin haul in de slack er de rope. You all take keer er dat ar een',' sezee, 'en I 'll take keer er dish yer een',' sezee.

"Den dey all put out en lef' Brer Tarrypin at de branch, en w'en dey got good en gone, he dove down inter de water, he did, en tie de bed-cord hard en fas' ter wunner deze yer big clay-roots, en den he riz up en gin a whoop.

"Brer B'ar he wrop de bed-cord roun' his

han', en wink at de gals, en wid dat he gin a big juk, but Brer Tarrypin ain't budge. Den he take bofe han's en gin a big pull, but, all de same, Brer Tarrypin ain't budge. Den he tu'n 'roun', he did, en put de rope cross his shoulders en try ter walk off wid Brer Tarrypin, but Brer Tarrypin look like he don't feel like walkin'. Den Brer Wolf, he put in en hope Brer B'ar pull, but dez like he did n't, en den dey all hope 'im, en, bless grashus! w'iles dey wuz all a pullin', Brer Tarrypin, he holler, en ax um w'y dey don't take up de slack. Den w'en Brer Tarrypin feel um quit pullin', he dove down, he did, en ontie de rope, en by de time dey got ter de branch, Brer Tarrypin, he wuz settin' in de aidge er de water des ez natchul ez de nex' un, en he up 'n say, sezee:

"'Dat las' pull er yone wuz a mighty stiff un, en a leetle mo'n you 'd er had me,' sezee. 'Youer monstus stout, Brer B'ar,' sezee, 'en you pulls like a yoke er steers, but I sorter had de purchis on you,' sezee.

"Den Brer B'ar, bein' 's his mouf 'gun ter water atter de sweetnin', he up 'n say he speck de candy's ripe, en off dey put atter it!"

"It 's a wonder," said the little boy, after a while, "that the rope did n't break."

"Break who?" exclaimed Uncle Remus, with a touch of indignation in his tone—"break who? In dem days, Miss Meadows's bed-cord would a hilt a mule."

This put an end to whatever doubts the child might have entertained.—*Uncle Remus.*

## WHY BROTHER BEAR HAS NO TAIL.

"I 'clar' ter gracious, honey," Uncle Remus exclaimed one night, as the little boy ran in, "you sholy ain't chaw'd yo' vittles. Hit ain't bin no time, skacely, sence the supper-bell rung, en ef you go on dis away, you 'll des nat'ally pe'sh yo'se'f out."

"Oh, I was n't hungry," said the little boy, "I had something before supper, and I was n't hungry anyway."

The old man looked keenly at the child, and presently he said:

"De ins en de outs er dat kinder talk all come ter de same p'int in my min'. Youer bin a-cuttin' up at de table, en Mars. John, he tuck'n sont you 'way fum dar, en w'iles he think youer off some'rs a-snifflin' en a-feelin' bad, yer you is a-high-primin' 'roun' des lak you done had mo' supper dan de king er Philanders."

Before the little boy could inquire about the king of Philanders he heard his father calling him. He started to go out, but Uncle Remus motioned him back.

"Des set right whar you is, honey—des set right still."

Then Uncle Remus went to the door and answered for the child; and a very queer answer it was—one that could be heard half over the plantation:

"Mars. John, I wish you en Miss Sally be so good ez ter let dat chile 'lone. He down yer cryin' he eyes out, en he ain't bodderin' 'long er nobody in de roun' worl'."

Uncle Remus stood in the door a moment to see what the reply would be, but he heard none. Thereupon he continued in the same loud tone:

"I ain't bin use ter no sich gwines on in Ole Miss time, en I ain't gwine git use ter it now. Dat I ain't."

Presently Tildy, the house-girl, carried the little boy his supper, and the girl was no sooner out of hearing than the child swapped it with Uncle Remus for a roasted yam, and the enjoyment of both seemed to be complete.

"Uncle Remus," said the little boy, after a while, "you know I was n't crying just now."

"Dat 's so," honey," the old man replied, "but 't would n't er bin long 'fo' you would er bin, kaze Mars. John bawl out lak a man w'at got a strop in he han', so w'at de diffunce?"

When they had finished eating, Uncle Remus busied himself in cutting and trimming some sole-leather for future use. His knife was so keen, and the leather fell away from it so smoothly and easily, that the little boy wanted to trim some himself. But to this Uncle Remus would not listen.

"'T ain't on'y chilluns w'at got de consate er doin' eve'y thing dey see yuther folks do. Hit 's grown folks w'at oughter know better," said the old man. "Dat 's des de way Brer B'ar git his tail broke off smick-smack-smoove, en down ter dis day he de funniest-lookin' creetur w'at wobble on top er dry groun'."

Instantly the little boy forgot all about Uncle Remus's sharp knife.

"Hit seem lak dat in dem days Brer Rabbit en Brer Tarrypin done gone in kerhoots fer ter out-do de t'er creeturs. One time Brer Rabbit tuck'n make a call on Brer Tarrypin, but w'en he git ter Brer Tarrypin house, he year talk fum Miss Tarrypin dat her ole man done gone fer ter spen' de day wid Mr. Mud-Turkle, w'ich

dey wuz blood kin. Brer Rabbit he put out atter Brer Tarrypin, en w'en he got ter Mr. Mud-Turkle house, dey all sot up, dey did, en tole tales, en den w'en twelf er'clock come dey had crawfish fer dinner, en dey 'joy deyse'f right erlong. Atter dinner dey went down ter Mr. Mud-Turkle mill-pon', en w'en dey git dar, Mr. Mud-Turkle en Brer Tarrypin dey 'muse deyse'f, dey did, wid slidin' fum de top uv a big slantin' rock down inter de water.

"I speck you moughter seen rocks in de water, 'fo' now, whar dey git green en slippy," said Uncle Remus.

The little boy had not only seen them, but had found them to be very dangerous to walk upon, and the old man continued:

"Well, den, dish yer rock wuz mighty slick en mighty slantin'. Mr. Mud-Turkle, he 'd crawl ter de top, en tu'n loose, en go a-sailin' down inter de water — *kersplash!* Ole Brer Tarrypin, he 'd foller atter, en slide down inter de water—*kersplash!* Ole Brer Rabbit, he sot off, he did, en praise um up.

"W'iles dey wuz a-gwine on dis away, a-havin' der fun, en 'joyin' deyse'f, yer come ole Brer B'ar. He year um 'laffin' en holl'in', en he hail 'um.

"'Heyo, folks! W'at all dis? Ef my eye ain't 'ceive me, dish yer's Brer Rabbit, en Brer Tarrypin, en old Unk' Tommy Mud-Turkle,' sez Brer B'ar, sezee.

"'De same,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'en yer we is 'joyin' de day dat passes des lak dey wa'n't no hard times.'

"'Well, well, well!' sez ole Brer B'ar, sezee, 'a-slippin' en a-slidin' en makin' free! En w'at de matter wid Brer Rabbit dat he ain't j'inin' in?' sezee.

"Ole Brer Rabbit he wink at Brer Tarrypin, en Brer Tarrypin he hunch Mr. Mud-Turkle, en den Brer Rabbit he up 'n 'low, he did:

"'My goodness, Brer B'ar! you can't 'speck a man fer ter slip en slide de whole blessid day, kin you? I done had my fun, en now I 'm a-settin' out yer lettin' my cloze dry. Hit 's tu'n en tu'n about wid me en deze gents w'en dey 's any fun gwine on,' sezee.

"'Maybe Brer B'ar might jine in wid us,' sez Brer Tarrypin, sezee.

"Brer Rabbit he des holler en laff.

"'Shoo!' sezee, 'Brer B'ar foot too big en he tail too long fer ter slide down dat rock,' sezee.

"Dis kinder put Brer B'ar on he mettle, en he up 'n 'spon', he did:

"'Maybe dey is, en maybe dey ain't, yit I ain't afeard ter try.'

"Wid dat, de yuthers tuck 'n make way fer 'im, en ole Brer B'ar he git up on de rock, he did, en squat down on he hunkers, en quile he tail und' 'im, en start down. Fus' he go sorter slow, en he grin lak he feel good; den he go sorter peart, en he grin lak he feel bad; den he go mo' pearter, en he grin lak he skeered; den he strack de slick part, en, gentermens! he swaller de grin en fetch a howl dat moughter bin yeard a mile, en he hit de water lak a chimbly a-fallin'.

"You kin gimme denial," Uncle Remus continued after a little pause, "but des ez sho' ez youer settin' dar, we'n Brer B'ar slick'd up en flew down dat rock, he break off he tail right smick-smack-smoove, en mo'n dat, w'en he make his disappear'nce up de big road, Brer Rabbit holler out:

"'Brer B'ar!—Oh, Brer B'ar! I year tell dat flax-seed poultices is mighty good fer so' places!'

"Yit Brer B'ar ain't look back."—*Nights with Uncle Remus.*

## KATHERINE SHERWOOD BONNER McDOWELL.[1]

(BORN, 1849—DIED, 1884.)

### HIERONYMUS POP AND THE BABY.

"NOW, 'Onymus Pop," said the mothe of that gentle boy, "you jist tak care of dis chile while I 'm gone to the hangin An' don't you leave dis house on no account not if de skies fall an' de earth opens t swaller yer."

Hieronymus grunted gloomily. He though it a burning shame that he should not go t the hanging; but never had his mother bee willing that he should have the least pleasure i life. It was either to tend the baby, or mi the cow's food, or to card wool, or cut wood or to pick a chicken, or wash up the floor, o to draw water, or to sprinkle down the clothe —always something. When every thing els failed, she had a way, that seemed to her so

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xxxi.

simply demoniac, of setting him at the alphabet. To be sure, she did not know the letters herself, but her teaching was none the less vigorous.

"What 's dat, 'Onymus?" she would say, pointing at random with her snuff brush to a letter.

"Q"—with a sniff.

Woe be unto young Pop if he faltered, and said it *might* be a Z. Mother Pop kept a rod ready, and used it as if she was born for nothing else. Naturally, he soon learned to stick brazenly to his first guess. But unfortunately he could not remember from one day to another what he had said; and his mother learned, after a time, to distinguish the forms of the letters, and to know that a curly letter called S on Tuesday could not possibly be a square-shaped E on Thursday. Her faith once shattered, 'Onymus had to suffer in the usual way.

The lad had been taught at spasmodic intervals by his sister Savannah—commonly called Sissy—who went to school, put on airs, and was always clean. Therefore Hieronymus hated her. Mother Pop herself was a little in awe of her accomplished daughter, and would

ask her no questions, even when most in doubt as to which was which of the letters G and C.

"A pretty thing!" she would mutter to herself, "if I must be a-learnin' things from my own chile, dat wuz' de mos' colicky baby I ever had, an' cos' me unheerd-of miseries in de time of her teethin'."

It seemed to Hieronymus that the climax of his impositions had come, when he was forced to stay at home and mind the baby, while his mother and the rest of them trotted off, gay as larks, to see a man hanged.

It was a hot afternoon, and the unwilling nurse suffered. The baby would n't go to sleep. He put it on the bed—a feather-bed—and why it did n't drop off to sleep, as a proper baby should, was more than the tired soul of Hieronymus could tell. He did every thing to soothe Tiddlekins. (The infant had not been named as yet, and by way of affection they addressed it as Tiddlekins.) He even went so far as to wave the flies away from it with a mulberry branch for the space of five or ten minutes. But as it still fretted and tossed, he let it severely alone, and the flies settled on the little black thing as if it had been a licorice stick.

After a while Tiddlekins grew aggressive, and egan to yell. Hieronymus, who had almost ound consolation in the contemplation of a loody picture pasted on the wall, cut from the eekly paper of a wicked city, was deprived ven of this solace. He picked up "de miser-ul little screech-owl," as he called it in his rath. He trotted it. He sang to it the sooth-ng ditty of—

> "'T ain't never gwine to rain no mo';
> Sun shines down on rich and po'."

But all was vain. Finally, in despair, he un-ressed Tiddlekins. He had heard his mother ay: "Of'en and of'en when a chile is a-scream-n' its breff away, 't ain't nothin' ails it 'cep'n *ins.*"

But there were no pins. Plenty of strings nd hard knots; but not a pin to account for ne antics of the unhappy Tiddlekins.

How it *did* scream! It lay on the stiffly raced knees of Hieronymus, and puckered up s face so tightly that it looked as if it had ome fresh from a wrinkle mould. There were o tears, but sharp regular yells, and rollings of s head, and a distracting monotony in its per ormances.

"Dis here chile looks 's if it 's got de me
sles," muttered Hi, gazing on the squirmin
atom with calm eyes of despair. Then, ru
ning his fingers over the neck and breast of th
small Tiddlekins, he cried, with the air of on
who makes a discovery, "It 's got de heat
*Dat 's* what ails Tiddlekins!"

There was really a little breaking out on th
child's body that might account for his restles
ness and squalls. And it was *such* a hot day
Perspiration streamed down Hi's back, whil
his head was dry. There was not a quiver i
the tree leaves, and the silver poplars showe
only their leaden side. The sunflowers wer
dropping their big heads; the flies seemed t
stick to the window-panes, and were too langui
to crawl.

Hieronymus had in him the materials o
which philosophers are made. He said to him
self, "'T ain't nothin' but heat dat 's de matte
wid dis baby; so uf *cose* he ought ter be coole
off."

But how to cool him off—that was the grea
question. Hi knitted his dark brows an
thought intently.

It happened that the chiefest treasure of th
Pop estate was a deep old well that in the ho

est days yielded water as refreshing as iced hampagne. The neighbors all made a convenience of the Pop well. And half way own its long cool hollow hung, pretty much ll of the time, milk cans, butter pats, fresh neats—all things that needed to be kept cool n summer days.

He looked at the hot, squirming, wretched lack baby on his lap; then he looked at the ell; and, simple, straightforward lad that he as, he put this and that together.

"If I was ter hang Tiddlekins down de ell," he reflected, "'t would n't be mo' dan hree jumps of a flea befo' he 's as cool as Christmas."

With this quick-witted youth to think was to ct. Before many minutes he had stuffed poor ttle Tiddlekins into the well bucket, though must be mentioned to his credit that he ied the baby securely in with his own susenders.

Warmed up with his exertions, content in his good riddance of such bad rubbish as Tidlekins, Hieronymus reposed himself on the eather-bed, and dropped off into a sweet slumber. From this he was aroused by the voice of small boy.

"Hello, Hi! I say, Hi Pop! whar is yer?"

"Here I is!" cried Hi, starting up. "What you want?"

Little Jim Rogers stood in the door-way.

"Towzer's dog," he said, in great excitement, "and daddy's bull-pup is gwine ter have a fight dis evenin'. Come on quick, if yer wants ter see de fun."

Up jumped Hi, and the two boys were off like a flash. *Not one thought to Tiddlekins in the well bucket.*

In due time the Pop family got home, and Mother Pop, fanning herself, was indulging in the moral reflections suitable to the occasion, when she checked herself suddenly, exclaiming, "But, land o' Jerusalem! whar 's 'Onymus an' de baby?"

"I witnessed Hieronymus," said the elegant Savannah, "as I wandered from school. He was with a multitude of boys, who cheered, without a sign of disap*per*ation, two canine beasts, that tore each other in deadly feud."

"Yer don't mean ter say, Sissy, dat 'Onymus Pop is gone ter a dog-fight?"

"Such are my meaning," said Sissy, with dignity.

"Den *whar 's* de baby?"

For answer, a long low wail smote upon their ears, as Savannah would have said.

"Fan me!" cried Mother Pop. "Dat 's Tiddlekins's voice."

"Never min' about fannin' mammy," cried Weekly, Savannah's twin, a youth of fifteen, who could read, and was much addicted to gory tales of thunder and blood; "let 's fin' de baby. P'r'aps he 's been murdered by dat ruffian Hi, an' dat 's his *ghos'* dat we hears a-callin'."

A search was instituted—under the bed, in the bed, in the wash-tub and the soup-kettle; behind the wood-pile, and in the pea vines; up the chimney, and in the ash-hopper; but all in vain. No Tiddlekins appeared, though still they heard him cry.

"Shade of Ole Hickory!" cried the father Pop, "whar, whar is dat chile?" Then, with a sudden lighting of the eye. "Unchain de dog," said he; "he 'll smell him out."

There was a superannuated bloodhound pertaining to the Pop ménage that they kept tied up all day under a delusion that he was fierce. They unchained this wild animal, and with many kicks endeavored to goad his nostrils to their duty.

It happened that a piece of fresh pork hung in the well, and Lord Percy—so was the dog called—was hungry. So he hurried with vivacity toward the fresh pork.

"De well!" shrieked Mother Pop, tumbling down all in a heap, and looking somehow like Turner's "Slave-Ship," as one stumpy leg protruded from the wreck of red flannel and ruffled petticoats.

"What shall we do?" said Sissy, with a helpless squeak.

"Why, git him out," said Mr. Pop, who was the practical one of the family.

He began to draw up the well bucket, aided by Weekly, who whispered darkly: "Dar 'll be anudder hangin' in town befo' long, *and Hi won't miss dat hangin'*."

Soon appeared a little woolly head, then half a black body, the rest of him being securely wedged in the well bucket. He looked like a jack-in-the-box. But he was cool, Tiddlekins was, no doubt of that.

Mother Pop revived at sight of her offspring, still living, and feebly sucking his thumb.

"Ef we had a whiskey bath ter put him in!" she cried.

Into the house flew Father Pop, seized the

quart cup, and was over to the white house on the hill in the wink of a cat's eye.

"He stammered forth his piteous tale," said Savannah, telling the story the next day to her schoolmates; "and Judge Chambers himself filled his cup with the best of Bourbon, and Miss Clara came over to see us resusirate the infant."

Mother Pop had Tiddlekins wrapped in hot flannel when he got back; and with a never-to-be-sufficiently-admired economy Mr. Pop moistened a rag with "the best of Bourbon," and said to his wife, "Jes rub him awhile, Cynthy, an' see if dat won't bring him roun'."

As she rubbed, he absent-mindedly raised the quart cup to his lips, and with three deep and grateful gulps the whiskey bath went to refresh the inner man of Tiddlekins's papa.

Then who so valorous and so affectionate as he? Dire were his threats against Hieronymus, deep his lamentations over his child.

"My po' little lammie!" he sobbed. "Work away, Cynthy. Dat chile mus' be saved, even if I should have ter go over ter de judge's for anudder quart o' whiskey. Nuthin' shall be spared to save that preciousest kid o' my ole age."

Miss Clara did not encourage his self-sacrificing proposal; but for all that, it was not long before Tiddlekins grew warm and lively, and winked at his father—so that good old man declared—as he lay on his back, placidly sucking a pig's tail. Savannah had roasted it in the ashes, and it had been cut from the piece of pork that had shared the well with Tiddlekins. The pork belonged to a neighbor, by-the-way; but at such a time the Pop family felt that they might dispense with the vain and useless ceremony of asking for it.

The excitement was over, the baby asleep, Miss Clara gone, and the sun well on its way to China, when a small figure was seen hovering about the gate. It had a limp air of dejection, and seemed to feel some delicacy about coming further.

"The miscreant is got back," remarked Savannah.

"Hieronymus," calls Mrs. Pop, "you may thank yo' heavenly stars dat you ain't a murderer dis summer day——"

"A-waitin' ter be hung nex' wild-grape-time," finished Weekly, pleasantly.

Mr. Pop said nothing. But he reached down from the mantel-shelf a long thin something,

shaped like a snake, and quivered it in the air.

Then he walked out to Hi, and taking him by the left ear, led him to the wood-pile.

And here——But I draw a veil.—*Harper's Magazine*, June, 1880.

## BRANDER MATTHEWS.[1]

(BORN, 1852.)

### CHESTERFIELD'S POSTAL-CARDS TO HIS SON.

The first postal-card contained the following message:

N. Y., 3/1/80.

MY DEAR BOY:

You are big enough to go to meeting barefoot, as the Yankee captain said to me in '55 when I ran away to sea, no older than you are now. I expect you to hoe your own row, as I 'm off by the 10:30 Pacific express. I 've no time for long letters, but I 'll drop you a postal-card of advice now and then. Rule No. 1: Tell the truth. Rule No. 2: Show the sand that 's in you. Verbum sap-head, as the foreman used to say when I ran a country weekly in '68.

Your aff'te Father,

J. QUINCY A. CHESTERFIELD.

[1] See Biographical Sketch, vol. i., p. xxxi.

WRITE ON THIS SIDE ADDRESS ONLY

Master A. Lincoln Chesterfield.
Military & Classical Institute
Tarrytown, N. Y.

The second postal-card:

LEADVILLE, COL., 17/1/80.

DEAR BOY:

It 's as cold here as the north end of a gravestone. I 'm glad you 're getting a good grip on the classics. Latin is useful: get the inside track and give the mare her head, as I heard the sports say in Cal., when I was lecturing in '75 on "Rum and Reform." Don't be scared of Greek either—especially as you have n't begun it yet. Rule 3: Never borrow trouble: it 's no good crossing a river before you get there.

Your affectionate Father.

P. S.—The mine is doing A 1.

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The third postal-card:

CHICAGO, 3/2/80.

DEAR BOY:

Sorry to hear you fought that Smith—a little bit of a cuss, looking like a bar of soap after a hard day's wash. I knew his father in '69, when I was in the Conn. legislature. He 's a pretty poor shoat, as we used to say in Cinn. in '60, when I was a telegraph clerk. Let the fellow alone. Rule 4: Keep out of a row, if

you can. Rule 5: If you can't keep out, go in head-first and fight like a fire-zouave. It 's the first fight that prevents more; just as we used to nail a skin of a chipmunk to the barn to warn off the rest.

Y'r Father.

---

The fourth postal-card:

OMAHA, 18/2/80.

DEAR BOY:

A difference of opinion makes horse-races, as I 've heard many a time in Ky., when I was a walking gent. on the southern circuit, in '58. But now you 've whaled the Smith boy, go easy. The mine gets better and better.

Your Father.

---

The fifth postal-card:

ON PALACE CAR "DAKOTA,"
ILL. C. C. RY., 29/2/80.

D'R BOY:

The mine is splendid. Over two millions in sight; and your revered dad owns a whole and undivided 1/5. Of course, I 'll send you the $10. Rule No. 6: Pay C. O. D. always. I was clerk for an auctioneer in '57, and I saw that if

a man don't pay on the nail, he soon gets sold out under the hammer. Tell the principal to draw on me for amt. due for schooling.

Y'r Father.

---

The sixth postal-card:

S. F., 21/3/80.

D'R BOY:

Yours rec'd. I taught school myself in '66 and I found all the boys knew more than I did. Rule 7: Don't think too much of yourself. The sun would shine, even if the cock did n't crow.

J. QUINCY A. CHESTERFIELD.

---

The seventh postal-card:

LEADVILLE, 29/3/80.

DEAR ABE:

Stick to the French grammar: it is n't easy. When I studied it in the trenches before Richmond in '64 the irregular verbs nearly threw me, but I mounted them every day as regularly as I did guard — though I did n't hone for it, as Johnny Reb used to say. What should I have done in Europe in '76, when I was introducing Cal. wines, if I 'd not known French?

Rule 8: Learn all the foreign tongues you can.
Rule 9: Learn to hold your own.

Y'r aff. Father.

---

The eighth postal-card:

CHICAGO, 30/4/80.

D'R BOY:

I 've no time to write. I 've gone into big spec with a man I first met in '65 when I took photos in Boston. They call Boston a good place to hail from: he and I got out of it quick, so as to hail from it as soon as possible. How do you get on with your mathematics?

Your Father,

J. QUINCY A. CHESTERFIELD.

---

The ninth postal-card:

ST. LOUIS, 10/5/80.

DEAR ABE:

I am sorry the arithmetic teacher is going to leave. I hope your next one will be as good. As I found in '59 when I was a surveyor, it 's a handy thing to have figures at the ends of your fingers. The spec looks bigger still. We 've taken in the man who edited the N. Y. daily on which I was a reporter in '67.

Y'r affectionate Father.

The tenth postal-card:

LEADVILLE, 20/5/80.

D'R BOY:

The mine is paying big money and I 'm putting it all in the spec—for a permanent investment, as Uncle Dan'l said when I was on the Street in '72, before the panic made me sell my seat in the board. I 've struck a streak of luck sure. Rule 10: When in luck, crowd things.

J. QUINCY A. CHESTERFIELD.

---

The eleventh postal-card:

LEADVILLE, 13/6/80.

MY DEAR ABE:

Mine looks badly; spec looks worse. But I don't give in; I 've Yankee grit. I believe if a Yankee was lying at the point of death, he 'd whittle it off to pick his teeth with. But I 'm worried and hurried. Tell the principal I 'll remit the quarter now due in a week or two.

J. Q. A. C.

---

The twelfth postal-card:

N. Y., 20/6/80.

MY DEAR BOY:

The spec has caved in and all that 's left of that whole and undivided 1/5 of mine has

gone to pay the loss. Y'r father is as badly off as he was in '65 when he peddled a History of the Rebellion, or in '73 when he went to Fla. to manage an orange plantation. I must have time to look around. Telegraph me at once if the principal has not a teacher of mathematics yet. I 'll apply for the place. I shall be glad to be with you again, my Abe.

Your affectionate Father.

---

The thirteenth postal-card:

GRAND CENTRAL DEPOT, N. Y.,
21/6/80.

D'R BOY:

Y'r telegram rec'd. Can't accept place. Have sent ck. for quarter due. Leave 3:45 for China to introduce American inventions. Will write fully on P. M. steamer. Shall be back in 8 or 10 mo's.—unless I run down to Australia. I think there 's a spec in patent medicines down there.

Bless you, my boy.

Y'r Father,

J. QUINCY A. CHESTERFIELD

## EVA L. OGDEN.

(BORN, 1853.)

### THE SEA.

SHE was rich and of high degree;
A poor and unknown artist he.
"Paint me," she said, "a view of the sea."

So he painted the sea as it looked the day
That Aphrodite arose from its spray;
And it broke, as she gazed on its face the while
Into its countless-dimpled smile.
"What a poky, stupid picture!" said she;
"I don't believe he *can* paint the sea!"

Then he painted a raging, tossing sea,
Storming, with fierce and sudden shock,
Wild cries, and writhing tongues of foam,
A towering, mighty fastness-rock.
In its sides, above those leaping crests,
The thronging sea-birds built their nests.
"What a disagreeable daub!" said she;
"Why, it is n't any thing like the sea!"

Then he painted a stretch of hot, brown sand,
With a big hotel on either hand,
And a handsome pavilion for the band,—
Not a sign of the water to be seen
Except one faint little streak of green.
"What a perfectly exquisite picture!" said she;
"It 's the very *image* of the sea!"

—*The Century Magazine*, Dec., 1881.

## RICHARD KENDALL MUNKITTRICK.

(BORN, 1853.)

### WHAT 'S IN A NAME?

IN letters large upon the frame,
That visitors might see,
The painter placed his humble name:
*O'Callaghan McGee.*

And from Beërsheba to Dan,
The critics with a nod
Exclaimed: "This painting Irishman
Adores his native sod.

"His stout heart's patriotic flame
There 's naught on earth can quell;
He takes no wild romantic name
To make his pictures sell!"

Then poets praised in sonnets neat
His stroke so bold and free:
No parlor wall was thought complete
That had n't a McGee.

All patriots before McGee
Threw lavishly their gold;
His works in the Academy
Were very quickly sold.

His "Digging Clams at Barnegat,"
His "When the Morning Smiled,"
His "Seven Miles from Ararat,"
His "Portrait of a Child,"

Were purchased in a single day
And lauded as divine.—

. . . . .

That night as in his *atelier*
The artist sipped his wine,

And looked upon his gilded frames,
He grinned from ear to ear:—
"They little think my *real* name 's
V. Stuyvesant De Vere!"

—*The Century Magazine*, Sept., 1883.

## HENRY C. BUNNER.[1]

(BORN, 1855—DIED, 1896.)

### CANDOR.

OCTOBER—A WOOD.

"I KNOW what you 're going to say," she said,
And she rose up looking uncommonly tall;
"You are going to speak of the hectic Fall,
And say you 're sorry the summer 's dead.
And no other summer was like it, you know,
And can I imagine what made it so?
Now are n't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you 're going to say," she said;
"You are going to ask if I forget
That day in June when the woods were wet,
And you carried me"—here she dropped her head—
"Over the creek; you are going to say,
Do I remember that horrid day.
Now are n't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xx.

"I know what you 're going to say," she said;
"You are going to say that since that time
You have rather tended to run to rhyme,
And "—her clear glance fell and her cheek grew red—
"And have I noticed your tone was queer?—
Why, everybody has seen it here!—
Now, are n't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you 're going to say," I said;
"You 're going to say you 've been much annoyed,
And I 'm short of tact—you will say devoid—
And I 'm clumsy and awkward, and call me Ted,
And I bear abuse like a dear old lamb,
And you 'll have me, anyway, just as I am.
Now are n't you, honestly?"
"Ye-es," she said.

—*Airs from Arcady and Elsewhere.*

## CHARLOTTE DUNNING.

(BORN, 1858.)

### AT THE MAISON DOBBE.

WHEN I turned from the sunlight of the Quai Masséna into the shadow of the narrow Rue Pierrenoire, I saw Alida come out of her shop and plant herself in the middle of the street. There she stood, arms akimbo, gazing intently at the china, the pictures, the bronzes imprisoned behind the great panes of plate-glass. Soon she glanced up to where a new gilt sign informed the passer-by that here was the Maison Dobbe; then she turned and saw me. She was a plump, dark-haired woman, with thick features and a swarthy skin. She was perhaps thirty-three or four years old, but she professed not to know her age.

"Miss Penniman!" she said, and a smile crept slowly to her face. "Here again. I am so glad to see you. I have just been arranging my windows. There is a Teniers," pointing to

a dull daub in a heavy frame. "Cheap at three thousand francs," she added, mechanically.

Her shop did not look unlike many a fashionable drawing-room, full of cabinets, cupboards, bronzes, Dutch clocks, mirrors, and candlesticks. There were rugs on the floor, hangings and screens everywhere, and the walls were covered with small pictures in huge frames. Alida pushed forward an uncomfortable spindle-legged chair, and begged me to be seated.

"Adolphe," she said, gently, and a tall young fellow in a sort of green livery stepped out of a dusky corner. She commanded him to fetch a bottle of wine and some biscuit; then turning to me—"Are you already long here?" she asked.

"I came yesterday," I answered, "and I want to stay all winter if I can find a cheap, decent boarding-place. Mademoiselle Dobbe, I will teach you a new idiom: I am dead broke."

Alida smiled: "I know that idiom since a long time. But why do you not take rooms and have meals sent in? I live thus; so do many." She brushed invisible dust off her gown as she added, softly, "Up-stairs there are two rooms—if you did not mind the old furniture—and we could arrange about the meals."

Mind the old furniture! I enjoyed the idea, and that very night slept in a great carved bedstead, and the next morning made my toilet with the aid of a superb Venetian mirror. Alida's whole house was a shop, and she used her wares herself. Coffee and rolls were served in a dining-room where there were two sideboards and three tall clocks. The china was exquisite, and Adolphe watched over it tenderly, a wrinkle of anxiety puckering his forehead. He came in and washed the fragile cups and plates, but when the bell over the shop-door rang he dropped his dishcloth and hastened down-stairs.

"Do you call him a clerk, or an errand-boy, or a buttons?" I asked.

"All the three," was the answer, given in English, as usual. She spoke several languages in the same nonchalant way that she did English, and with a sublime disregard of idioms. She succeeded in making herself understood, however.

Besides Adolphe, she had a maid, who also filled a nondescript position. She took care of the rooms, she sewed, she ran errands, and she tended shop. I tended shop, too, after a while; it was as catching as measles or mumps, and it

was a very easy thing to do. When any one came in, I displayed the art treasures and chatted about the weather. The trifles had their prices marked on them, but the larger articles—the pictures, furniture, tapestry—were of fluctuating value, and no one tried to sell them in Alida's absence. A would-be purchaser was politely asked to call again, and in most cases the second call was made.

"It is not wise to be eager to sell," said Alida; and this was her policy. She was slow, unenthusiastic, even when driving a close bargain. She acted as though it were a matter of supreme indifference to her whether she made a sale or not. At first I labored under the delusion that she was rather dull-pated, but I soon found out that there was a shrewd, calculating brain behind her sleepy eyes. How she came to engage in the bric-à-brac trade, how she acquired her knowledge of it, were mysteries I never could fathom. She bore an unblemished reputation, and was highly respected by the people who knew her best. She went to the English church with great regularity; she observed Sunday; but I am sceptical enough to think that she saw some advantage in thus yielding to English prejudices. I should con-

sider Alida one of the most sensible and sagacious of women, were it not for the Edouard Braun episode. A photograph of Edouard Braun stood on her dressing-table, and letters came from him frequently. I ventured to banter her about him a little, and she bore it with the same stolid good-humor that she did any scoffing remarks upon her old pictures and furniture. I could not live there without getting some knowledge of the bric-à-brac trade, and I did not scruple to say what I thought about it. The works of the old masters excited my derision most, and above all the dingy daub that declared itself a Teniers.

"It is a humbug, Alida," I said, "and you know it."

She smiled sweetly: "My dear friend, I cannot tell; but I know I shall sell it." Whereupon she dropped it behind an old sofa. There was always some old master behind that sofa, and it was always discovered by some curiosity-seeker. I saw Alida put three or four pictures there at different times, and whenever one was discovered she always wore a look of mild amazement. Was it genuine? the lucky finder would ask. Ah, that was a question she could never answer, unfortunately. She had bought

it as a speculation, or her agent had sent it to her, but she could not vouch for it. Then she would look so childishly stupid that it was impossible to consider her a connoisseur, and I myself was never able to discover whether or not she was a judge of bric-à-brac.

"Is this genuine?" I asked once when a new piece of tapestry came. "Is it genuine, Alida? or did your friends in Rotterdam make it for you?—the cousins, for instance, who make the cupboards, or the uncle who makes the old clocks? Is it genuine?"

"I think so; I do not know," she replied, in her helpless way. "How can I tell? Ah, miss, if I order an old clock to be made for me, then I know it is not genuine; but when I buy a ready-made old clock I cannot tell. Nobody can," she added, with a cynical smile.

She was likewise ignorant of her parentage. She was almost sure her father was Dutch, she fancied her mother was Russian.

"It makes no difference," she said. "They are dead—I know that—and buried."

Her idea of happiness was to eat and drink her fill, and then listen in dreamy silence to an endless round of operatic airs tinkled out of a large music-box. At such times Adolphe

would steal in and place a cup of black coffee at her elbow—coffee that he made himself, just as he knew she liked it.

"That good Adolphe!" she would murmur, so caressingly that a gleam of pleasure always lighted up the good Adolphe's broad, stolid countenance.

He puzzled me quite as much as his mistress did. He was not servile, although he washed the china; and he had a very independent air despite his half livery. I found myself wondering how old he might be, for he was one of those slim creatures with dusty blond hair and white eyebrows whose age is extremely difficult to guess. His skin was fresh and rosy, not a trace of beard was visible; but in his little gray eyes lurked an expression not altogether boyish. Alida treated him as though he were a lad of sixteen summers, and sometimes urged him to take a holiday—an offer which he always declined.

"He is too sedate for his years," she said. "It is not natural that a boy should work as he does. Would you believe it?—he gets a lesson in English three evenings a week." And from this stray remark I surmised that Adolphe was more ambitious than he looked.

Life at the Maison Dobbe was growing rather humdrum, when we were all plunged into a great state of excitement by the appearance of Edouard Braun. His good looks did not propitiate me, and he took such pains to explain that he was Braun, not Brown, that I instantly made up my mind he was English, not German. My opinion was strengthened by his beautiful Cockney accent, which he declared was acquired during his long residence in London.

Alida, who believed no one, did believe him, and gravely told me that he was a rich man and a member of an excellent family in Vienna. Adolphe and I were sceptical, the maid sided with her mistress, and so the house of Dobbe was divided against itself.

One dismal afternoon I found Adolphe in the shop, poring over a tattered copy of one of Ouida's romances, and looking out the words in the dictionary with a gravity and earnestness that struck me as truly comic. "Where is Mademoiselle Dobbe?" I asked, in English.

"Gone out with Monsieur Braun," Adolphe answered, in the same language. He paused, looked at me, and added, sadly, "Damn that Braun!"

"Oh, you must not say that!" I exclaimed, with all a spinster's horror of profanity.

"Is it not good English?" quoth Adolphe, in cherubic innocence. "It is in this book here," tapping the tattered romance.

I was forced to admit that it was idiomatic and correct enough in one sense; but when I explained my objection to the adjective, Adolphe glided off into a torrent of glib French apologies. "But, mademoiselle," he continued, "that Braun gambles at Monte Carlo. He was a valet, and was discharged because he stole from his master. One of my friends knows him; but, alas, I dare not say a word of this to Mademoiselle Dobbe." He looked ineffably miserable, and his lips quivered.

I was on the point of giving him a franc to assuage his childish grief, when two fussy, vulgar English women entered the shop, and in bad French asked the price of a beautiful brass sconce. It was one of the articles that only Alida herself sold, but instead of saying that the proprietor was out, and the customers must call again, Adolphe rubbed his dusty hair, and hesitatingly demanded a hundred francs.

I was horrified, for I knew the sconce to be worth only half that sum.

Adolphe seemed frightened, confused, perplexed, and acted like such a blockhead that one of the women remarked frankly in her native tongue that he was quite an idiot. Then the customer asked to see the proprietor, and Adolphe stammered out that the proprietor had gone to Belgium to bury her mother. The comedy ended with the sale of the sconce. No sooner had the women quitted the shop than Adolphe turned to me with a smile—such a smile!—as astute as a Roman augur's. I was glad I had not offered him a franc to assuage his grief.

When he told Alida of the bargain, she opened her sloe-black eyes. "One hundred francs!" she repeated.

Adolphe nodded. "And my commission?' he murmured softly.

Alida gave him a tap on the shoulder and a piece of gold. Ever after she treated him with profound respect, and she said to me, "He is Swiss; he is clever."

Meanwhile Monsieur Braun came every day to the Maison Dobbe. He sang little songs to a guitar accompaniment, completely silencing the once favorite music-box. I think that he must at some time have figured in a music-hall,

he knew such a string of tawdry ditties, and sang with such a melo-dramatic air.

Adolphe listened to him patiently, and in the intervals of the singing served Alida with the coffee she loved. If black coffee could have broken the spell, Monsieur Braun would have received his *congé;* but the beverage was not so potent, and the sweethearts gallivanted gayly while Adolphe tended shop and studied Ouida's works.

"She will marry him," was the burden of his plaint.

"Why should you care?" I asked at last.

Adolphe stared. "But he will spend all her money, mademoiselle. It is shameful," he added, sadly, "how foolish women are."

This unflattering remark puzzled me. It was the utterance of no callow boy, and I looked searchingly at Adolphe's clean pink-and-white face. I detected tiny wrinkles around his eyes; I almost believed there was a shimmer of gray over his thick, tow-colored hair. One morning early, unmistakable traces of a beard were visible. Altogether, I put Adolphe down as a man who for some occult reason chose to look as much like a boy as possible. My suspicions were deepened when I found him one day going

through the pockets of Monsieur Braun's light tan-colored overcoat. He brought out a pair of gloves, smelled them, and put them back. A gaudy silk handkerchief underwent the same treatment, and then from the depths of an inner pocket he produced a letter.

As he was about to read it, I stepped forward. "Adolphe," said I, sternly.

He beckoned to me with a smile. "What a fool is a man who leaves his letters in his pockets!" he said, with a cunning expression. Then he calmly read the letter, made a few notes of its contents, and put the epistle back where he had found it.

It was nothing to me what he or Alida or Monsieur Braun chose to do, but I watched them all with lively interest. I was not a whit surprised when one fine day Adolphe said he was going to take a vacation. Alida begged him to stay, but he was inexorable, and accordingly off he went, no one knew whither. About a week later I was called to London on business, and I too was forced to bid adieu to the Maison Dobbe.

"You will never see the Maison Dobbe again," Alida said. "I am going to sell up—or is it down?"

"Out," I answered. "And *après?*"

"I am going to marry," quoth Alida, "and then farewell shop."

To leave was like breaking off in the middle of a three-volume novel; and all the way to Paris I wondered what the end would be. Arrived there, however, the first person I met at the station was Adolphe, accompanying a stout, complacent, middle-aged dame evidently of London extraction.

"Mees Penniman!" cried Adolphe as soon as he caught sight of me.

"Going back to Nice?" I said.

He nodded: "And that lady yonder is going with me. She is English, she is rich, she takes in lodgers, and I want to introduce her to Mademoiselle Dobbe." Adolphe passed his hand over his mouth, and smiled apologetically. "You see," he added, "she is Madame Edouard Braun." Then Adolphe's smile vanished. "But she says she has had enough of him; she says anybody is welcome to him. What do you suppose Mademoiselle Dobbe will do?"

I was too much scandalized to reply immediately, and before I could put my horror at the question into words the guard came along and swept Adolphe and Madame Braun off to

a carriage. For my part, I never wished to see them again, or Alida Dobbe either, but I must confess that I was curious to know how Adolphe's question would be answered. It was a full year before I found out. I was in London that spring, and I met Alida in Regent Street. She was elegantly, not to say gaudily dressed in a straw-colored silk suit and a frivolous little lace bonnet. She leaned on the arm of a tall, slim man whose mustache and whiskers matched her dress perfectly in color. She simpered and bridled when she saw me, and promptly begged leave to present her husband, Monsieur Weitlaufer. Monsieur lifted his hat, and murmured "charmed" or "delighted" in a voice that sounded very familiar. I looked up at him quickly.

"Yes," said Alida, with a slow, rapturous smile—"the good Adolphe."—*Cabin and Gondola.*

## HELEN GRAY CONE.[1]

(BORN, 1859.)

### THE TENDER HEART.

SHE gazed upon the burnished brace
Of plump ruffed grouse he showed with pride;
Angelic grief was in her face;
"How *could* you do it, dear?" she sighed.
"The poor, pathetic, moveless wings!
The songs all hushed—oh, cruel shame!"
Said he, "The partridge never sings."
Said she, "The sin is quite the same.

"You men are savage through and through.
A boy is always bringing in
Some string of bird's eggs, white or blue,
Or butterfly upon a pin.
The angle-worm in anguish dies,
Impaled, the pretty trout to tease——"
"My own, I fish for trout with flies——"
"Don't wander from the question, please!"

[1] See Biographical Sketch, p. xxi.

She quoted Burns's "Wounded Hare,"
And certain burning lines of Blake's,
And Ruskin on the fowls of air,
And Coleridge on the water-snakes.
At Emerson's "Forbearance" he
Began to feel his will benumbed;
At Browning's "Donald" utterly
His soul surrendered and succumbed.

"Oh, gentlest of all gentle girls,"
He thought, "beneath the blessed sun!"
He saw her lashes hung with pearls,
And swore to give away his gun.
She smiled to find her point was gained,
And went, with happy parting words
(He subsequently ascertained),
To trim her hat with humming-birds.

—*Oberon and Puck.*

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